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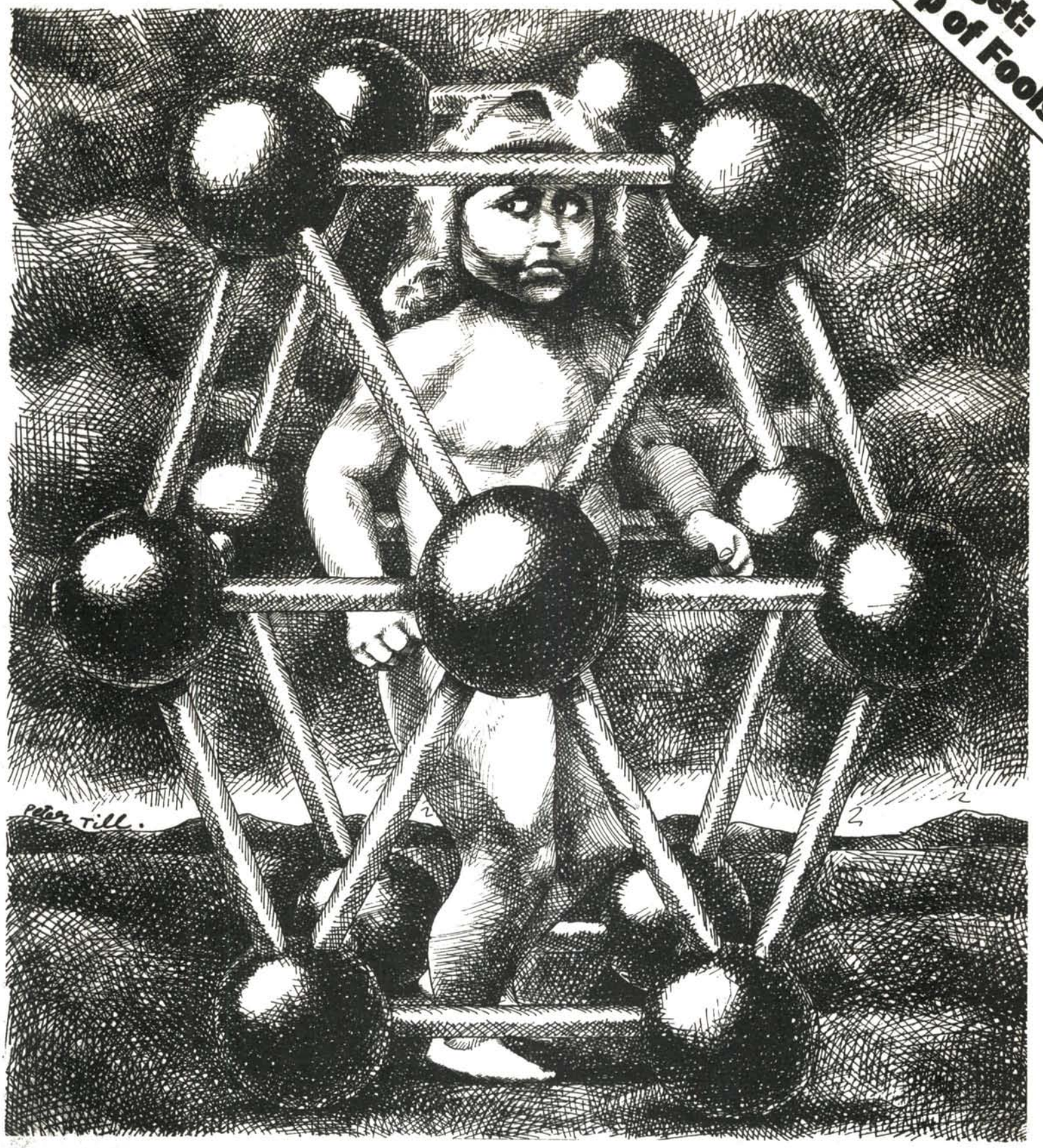
NEW STATESM

Budget: the Ship of Fools



ENERGY & THE CORPORATE STATE

Escaping from the nuclear cage

Franz-Joseph Strauss: Portrait of a demagogue

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NEW STATESMAN
Vol 99 28 March 1980 No 2558

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Pressing on regardless

A FANATIC, in one famous definition, is someone who redoubles his efforts when he has lost sight of his aims. Sir Geoffrey Howe demonstrated this week in his Budget speech that he is indeed a fanatic.

His aims, when he commenced his Chancellorship, were to reduce inflation and reinvigorate British industry – that is to do him the credit of taking his remarks seriously. Inflation, rather obviously, is worse as the result of his activities, and there is not the slightest sign of the industrial renaissance that he and his leader promised to the nation. But Sir Geoffrey, confronted with the evidence that all of his shots are going wide, merely presses the panic-button and increases his rate of fire.

The most disturbing index of fanaticism appeared quite early in his speech. There was *no doubt*, he said, that Government borrowing played a major part in the growth of the money supply and the crowding out of private-sector investment. Even the Treasury economists must have winced when they heard their chieftain pronounce this as a certainty, for it would be difficult to find a proposition in practical economics where the empirical evidence is more ambiguous, and more open to doubt. What the remark proves is not that Sir Geoffrey is an incompetent Chancellor – we have not, in any case, had too many competent ones lately. What it proves is that his mental cast is that of the true fanatic, the true authoritarian. If the world does not behave as I want it to, I will shout at it until it does.

INSOFAR as there is a strategy in the Tory budget, it depends upon the notion of the setting of four-year 'targets' for money-supply and government borrowing. But there is, in the first place, no detail about how those targets are to be achieved – so far, Sir Geoffrey has been unable to make either of those indicators obey his whim with any precision. But even if the targets are to be achieved, he cannot show that they will achieve his anti-inflationary ideal. We are dealing entirely in the area of faith, and moral gestures.

In short, this is not a budget which deals in hard evidence, in political and economic arithmetic. It deals in moral, or anyway moralistic statements of a general kind – about hard work, self-reliance, enterprise and sacrifice.

Now, a budget may be none the worse because it deals in moral values, rather than economic science. It might even be that the people of Britain could be expected to respond – yet again – to a moral call. But anyone who makes a moral appeal is apt to be examined upon the quality of his morals.

So, fine language aside, who makes the sacrifices in an economy which is expected to decline by 2½ per cent next year? Overwhelmingly, it is the people who are least responsible for this state of affairs. The abolition in 1982 of earnings-related unemployment benefit, the taxing of remaining benefits, increased health service charges, the cuts in government housing programmes and the higher prices – and the cuts in government aid to nationalised industries – will inevitably bring economic sacrifice to ordinary industrial workers and their families.

Many of these people, of course, voted for the Thatcher government because of the Labour party's incapacity to challenge the idea that vast sums of public money could be saved without cutting services. The treatment they are now receiving contrasts sharply with the Budget's treatment of a handful of high salary earners and payers of capital taxes. Two-thirds of estates currently paying capital transfer tax will not in future pay it, and tax rates upon high incomes, and on investment incomes, are being protected from the effects of inflation.

Clearly this is not the tone in which you can discuss sacrifice and hope to be believed. The suspect economics of the Budget would matter much less if it had any appearance of justice. But it does not, and for all the dissatisfaction within the Tory party (and parts of business) it is a reaffirmation of the government's determination to embark on a policy of class warfare, in which the workers will be cajoled and disciplined into obedience.

When that, too, meets with an ignominious failure, no doubt the good Sir Geoffrey will still be on hand to recommend a stiffer dose. Evidence may mean nothing to him, but perhaps it has not lost its charm for the electorate.

NOTES

Yadin speaks out

Christopher Hitchens writes: The Israeli cabinet is reportedly split over the issue of new settlements on the West Bank. The division is 'tactical' in that it revolves around timing, and around the potential isolation of Israel from its American and Egyptian allies. The interesting thing about the argument (apart from the fact that it may well wreck Camp David) is that it divides Mr Begin from his deputy Prime Minister, Professor Yigael Yadin.

I recently had a meeting for the record with Professor Yadin, who is currently very concerned with Israel's image abroad. His party, the Democratic Movement, which has itself split on the issue of entering a coalition with Mr Begin, is worried that hasty new acquisitions of Arab land will make it impossible to halt the drift of international opinion towards recognising the PLO.

Professor Yadin was very critical of the current European initiatives in this direction, especially Lord Carrington's statements about 'self-determination' for the Palestinians. He was at pains to emphasise the Russian threat in the region, and the need for anti-Communist forces in the region to bury their differences. Faced with Soviet expansion, he argued, it was not only the Egyptians who thought that Israeli occupation of Arab territory was a secondary issue. He was asked if he would take this view if it was Israeli and not Arab territory which was under occupation, and repeated that the Russian menace was the main one.

Nevertheless, Yadin made clear his misgivings about the present pattern of Israeli occupation – if only because of the ammunition it gives to Israel's enemies abroad. The decision to annex a large area of Arab-owned land near Jerusalem had just been taken (causing the appalling foul-up over the American vote at the United Nations). Since then, the Begin government has decided to press ahead with a settlement in the heart of Arab Hebron, thus jeopardising the future of any Cairo-Jerusalem accord on Palestinian 'autonomy'.

Professor Yadin was especially outspoken on the decision of the Austrian Government to move ahead of the rest of Europe and offer diplomatic

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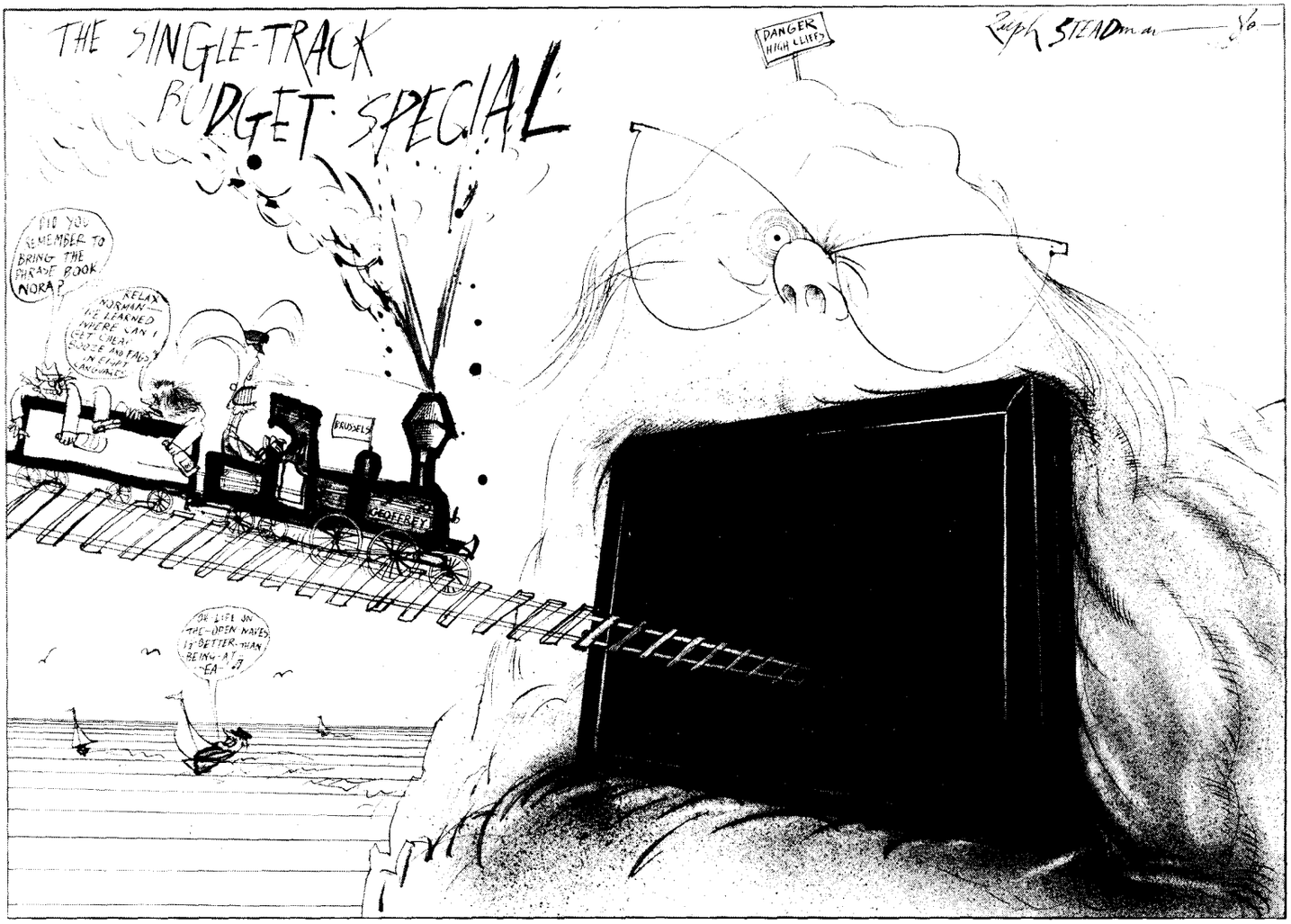
THE SINGLE-TRACK BUDGET SPECIAL
Ralph Steadman '80
DANGER HIGH CLIFFS
DID YOU REMEMBER TO BRING THE PHRASE BOOK NORA?
RELAX NORMAN I'VE LEARNED WHERE CAN I GET CHEAP BOOZE AND FAGS IN EIGHT LANGUAGES
BRUSSELS
GEOFFREY
OH LIFE ON THE OPEN WAVES IS BETTER THAN BEING AT SEA

NOTES

recognition to the PLO. It was particularly annoying, he said, that Chancellor Kreisky, the man mainly responsible for the move, was himself a Jew. There was a time, said Professor Yadin, when it was a source of pride if a Jew achieved high office in a Christian country. But with this 'tragedy for Israel', this was no longer the case. He went so far as to suggest that there might be 'something psychological' in Herr Kreisky's attitude to the Jewish state.

The current debate in Israel transcends the usual clichés of 'hawks' and 'dove'. Professor Yadin is a hawk in many ways, with a distinguished military record. But for whatever reasons of realpolitik he is unlikely to compose his differences with his coalition partner.

Carter's draft hits trouble

Brian Wilson writes: As demonstrators opposed to registration for the military draft gathered in Washington at the weekend the whole issue was threatening to turn into a major irritation and embarrassment for President Carter. Thirty thousand took part in Saturday's demonstration and many stayed to lobby Congress on Monday. The draft registration plan, which would require all 18 and 19 year olds to sign up during two five-day periods in June, was conceived in the immediate wake of the Soviet action in Afghanistan and looked at first as if it would sail through on the patriotic tide.

Carter's position was first undermined by his own military advisers who made it known publicly that they saw no need for registration since, in the event of crisis, mobilisation could take place just as quickly without it. Then the House Appropriations Committee got to work: opponents of registration have succeeded in delaying indefinitely a vote on whether or not to grant the President the necessary funds to facilitate it. The longer the vote is delayed, with conventions and elections drawing closer, the more likely it is that wavering Congressmen will shy clear of endorsing registration.

The President has the authority to register men and needs approval only for the funds to pay for the exercise. His advisers, rather than suffer a humiliating rebuff, are now looking for ways of funding registration out of existing appropriations. But any move in this direction would spark off a fresh Congressional outcry. Carter has already abandoned the plan to register women as well as men, in the face of Congressional opposition, though his opponents always assumed this could be abandoned, as a phoney compromise.

Birmingham clubs keep blacks out

Anna Coote writes: Race discrimination is still widely practiced by Birmingham night clubs, in spite of two formal investigations by the Commission for Racial Equality, which found breaches of the law. Black hotel workers Cecil Matongo and Trevor Wilson have demonstrated to an ATV team that they can only be sure of gaining entry to two out of ten clubs which are still open in Birmingham when they finish work late in the evening; as far as the others are concerned, they say they have found it 'a game of chance'.

The ATV crew has filmed the two men being turned away, in a series of humiliating encounters, from Peppermint Place, Boogies and Maximillians – and reports that although they later applied in writing for membership, they are still waiting for replies. The same clubs were next approached in the same manner by whites – who had no trouble getting in without membership cards.

The Mount Pleasant Working Men's Club, which was subject to one of the CRE's investigations, was found to operate an unlawful colour bar when it refused to admit former seaman Josephus Thomas, who believed he had a right to associate membership by virtue of belonging to the Clubs and Institutes Union. When the CRE issued the Mount Pleasant club with a non-discrimination notice, which instructed it to obey the law, it said its doors were closed to CIU cardholders who had not also been accepted for membership of Mount Pleasant. All new applicants had to be proposed by two existing members (all of whom are white). Thus, without actually breaking the law, the club can be fairly sure that blacks will not cross the threshold.

The CRE has also issued a non-discrimination notice to Genture Restaurants of Birmingham, whose Polyanna's discotheque had refused to accept bookings from some blacks as well as from a party of Chinese: it now appears to have ceased to operate a race or colour bar. But the CRE's powers are clearly inadequate as a means of eliminating racism throughout the city's clubs.

The programme 'Members Only' is being transmitted in the Midlands next month.

DESMOND DE SILVA

In the article 'No proof, so he must be guilty' (NS 14 March) reference was made to a Mr de Silva, defence barrister in the original case of *R v Theberge* at Reading Crown Court. We should like to make it absolutely clear that this Mr de Silva (whose first name is Harendra) is not the same person as Mr Desmond de Silva, who is also a barrister but who had no connection with this case. We regret any confusion or distress caused by this coincidence of surnames.

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Dole victims

Ruth Lister writes: The Govermment's plans to end the index-linking of unemployment and certain other social security benefits in the name of increasing work incentives mark a new vicious phase in the familiar pastime of 'blaming the victim'. It has become part of the conventional wisdom that 'over-generous' benefits are acting as a disincentive to work. But official figures* show that only very few families with children are likely to be better off on benefit and even a four-child family would have to be earning as little as £45 gross to be better off on the dole. This means that fewer than 100,000 men, out of a working population of 22 million, would be better off out of work than in work. And even they are not free simply to down tools, as anyone who leaves a job voluntarily without good cause stands to lose benefit for up to six weeks.

It is true that there are rather more people for whom the financial rewards of working are not that great. But an analysis by the DHSS of actual cases concluded that 'this financial disincentive is only one of a number of factors, and that it does not in itself deter more than a small proportion from seeking and finding work. The availability of jobs is the crucial factor'. Current economic policies are going to mean fewer and fewer available jobs which is why it is so convenient to ignore the facts and to channel public concern about rising unemployment into hostility against the unemployed themselves.

The work incentives myth also provides a useful rationalisation of reneging on the Chancellor's pledge in last year's Budget speech that expenditure cuts must not bear 'unfairly on the most vulnerable members of society'. A cut in the real value of unemployment benefit will almost certainly be paralleled by a cut in the 'short-term' adult supplementary benefit rates because, under the Social Security Bill, these will be aligned with the unemployment benefit rate. Thus it is not just unemployment and sickness beneficiaries who are likely to be hit, but also one-parent families and disabled claimants who have been on supplementary benefit for less than a year and the long-term unemployed who never qualify for the higher, long-term supplementary benefit rate; in other words many of 'the most vulnerable members of society'.

A cut of 5 per cent in the value of unemployment benefit has been predicted, which will mean a weekly loss of about £1.50 to £1.75 for a couple. If the official inflation estimate for November proves too low, as seems likely, benefits could end up being cut by considerably more than 5 per cent. The effects will be grim, for even before the cuts flat-rate unemployment benefit for a couple with two children is only £33.35 a week plus £8 child benefit which is paid in work also.

*Quoted in *So who's better off on the dole?* CPAG, 40p.

Welsh arson

Jim Caldwell writes from Cardiff: Plaid Cymru, the Welsh Language Society and other Welsh nationalist groups have all condemned the campaign of arson which has so far destroyed or badly damaged 29 holiday homes. But none of them is surprised by the campaign and they have admitted, reluctantly, that it has focused attention on the conditions of rural Wales where their peaceful protests failed

The Welsh Language Society has decided to relaunch its campaign on the second home issue (shelved in favour of the drive to make the fourth TV channel Welsh) and is demanding that local authorities use their statutory powers to buy up empty homes as council houses.

Plaid Cymru has been pressing for an economic plan for Wales which would include provision for the West and North, where unemployment is up to three times the national average. It wants better roads to the West, homes for local people, industrial parks at key centres and light industry based in smaller towns. Some of the money pruned from the Welsh Development Agency's budget has been restored – but specifically to go to the industrialised areas affected by the steel closures, South Wales and Deeside. Last week the WDA told Dyfed County Council that 150,000 square feet of factory promised to their area would not be provided in the near future. The three-year-old Development Board for Rural Wales has had some impact but, like the WDA, desperately needs more funds – which are unlikely to be forthcoming in the current political climate. Plaid's Dafydd Williams looks with envy at Ireland, which he feels has gained more as an independent member of the EEC than Wales has as a 'depressed region' of Britain.

At least part of the reason why people leave the West and North is that they cannot afford such homes as come on to the market, and cannot get council houses. Dafydd Thomas, nationalist MP for Merioneth, is pressing for changes in the Housing

Bill which would allow local authorities to levy higher rates on second homes; set a limit to the percentage of houses in a commmity which would be sold for holiday use; and make the switch from first to second home a change of use, requiring planning permission.

One local initiative on the housing front has shown what could be done by local authorities if they had the money and the will to buy up empty houses. Tai Gwynedd (the Gwynedd Housing Association), formed in 1971 to buy up empty houses, now owns homes totalling £300,000 in value which are let to local families. Alongside them, and linked to the Housing Corporation, is a new association called Tai Bryri.

Dafydd Ivan, organiser of Tai Gwynedd, agrees that the arson campaign is having more impact on the second home market than anything done before. He cites many cases of people forced to leave his area because they cannot find rented accommodation: 'There is not a shortage of houses, but a lot of housing is being misused.'

For international Socialism

David Bell writes: In an encouraging development in its normally skeletal international contacts, the Labour Party last week played host to Jean Pierre Chevenment, founder member of the workers' control group CERES within the French Socialist Party and chief architect behind the PSF's new programme, *Projet Socialiste*, which has just been published with an initial print order of 150,000. The Projet represents an example future authors of the Labour manifesto might follow. The fruit of much work since the concept was first approved at a party conference in March 1979, the Projet was approved at a special conference, which incorporated 83 amendments from the activists in the region.

Nevertheless, the Projet bears the imprint of Chevenment and CERES. It is in three parts: Comprendre, vouloir, agir (Understand, want, act). The first two sections, which are those most influenced by CERES, are the ideological background to the policy proposals contained in the last.

The programme emphasises the need for structural change, including the nationalisation of big industrial groups to reorganise the French internal markets where, like Britain, imports are growing faster than exports. It says it is necessary to construct European solutions – not in a supra-national sense but in the construction of complementary rather than competing interests. More important than economic change, the programme stresses the reform of social relations in the factory, through self-management.

Still no proof — but still guilty

Francis Wheen writes: First the good news. Fernand Theberge, the French-Canadian found guilty of being 'knowingly concerned' in the importation of cannabis despite a marked absence of proof (see NS 14 March), will shortly be reunited with his wife in Vancouver after spending the past two years in British prisons.

The bad news is that he is still, in the eyes of the law, guilty. His appeal against the conviction was rejected in London last week, but the three appeal judges – Ormrod, Comyn and Jupp – agreed that his sentence was excessive, and reduced it from four years to three. With remission, this meant that Theberge was due for immediate deportation, but there is likely to be a delay of a week of so while the Home Office go through the correct procedure and the Canadian High Commission renew his passport (which, coincidentally, expired the day after the appeal).

It may seem extraordinary that a man who has been convicted on such flimsy evidence can have his conviction confirmed in the appeal court, but the judges are not to blame. The defence counsel ditched a number of the strongest arguments and based his plea largely on rather minor matters; indeed Lord Justice Ormrod interrupted him at one point to say: 'May I tell you something? Weak points have a way of destroying strong ones.'

In the end defence counsel rested his case mainly on the danger of cross-contamination during the drug test. True, this was a weapon in the defence's armoury, but it should never have been more than a subsidiary to the main argument: the only proof directly linking Theberge with cannabis was traces, invisible to the human eye, allegedly found on a pair of scissors in his possession. The test which located these traces is admitted by its own manufacturers to be inconclusive, suitable only as a prelude to proper laboratory examination; and when a lab test was carried out on the scissors the result was negative. Moreover, the filter papers which had allegedly suggested the presence of cannabis mysteriously disappeared before the trial.

Another possible reason for the failure of Theberge's appeal against conviction was that the only two people to testify at last week's appeal were both prosecution witnesses – a customs officer and a scientist from the Government Chemist's office. The defence had found a distinguished forensic scientist who was prepared to give evidence, but although he was present at the appeal court last week he was never used. Mr Theberge's solicitor said this week that he had no idea why the defence barrister had failed to call this witness.

Wessex Developments Ltd holds 5 per cent of the equity of Radio Avonside not 55 per cent as we stated last week. Neither the Western Daily Press *nor any other newspaper in the area has any interest in Avonside's equity. Other media owners have been similarly excluded from Avonside's shareholding.*

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LABOUR PARTY
Patrick Wintour

Fabians highlight the dreadful state of Labour's finances

Recruit or die

THE LABOUR PARTY will be running an annual deficit of £960,000 by 1982 and the party's accumulated deficit on its general fund will have reached nearly £2.5m., according to figures being prepared by the Fabian Society as part of its evidence to the Labour Party inquiry. The evidence begins with the words:

> The size of the party's financial problems is immense and still not fully appreciated within the party . . . the party no longer has a reserve fund or any liquifiable assets, the last available detailed accounts show desperate remedies being taken to cover the deficits – repayment of affiliation fees, sales of investments plus a substantial increase in the number of creditors.

The financial crisis is caused, in the main, because income is not rising as fast as inflation. The reason for this is the stagnation in membership and affiliation. The £960,000 deficit in 1982 is based on maintaining services at their 1978 level at a total cost of £4m., an increase in union national affiliation to 40p per member and a CLP affiliation fee of £2.50 per member with an average of 300 members per CLP. This represents the middle range of the Fabians' three assumptions.

The Fabians highlight a particularly worrying aspect of the Labour Party's finances: as a result of warnings of an accumulated £1.4m. deficit by 1980, the party has already made extensive cuts in expenditure as well as substantially increasing the cost of an individual's subscription. The Fabians are also gloomy about finding any new sources of income. Indeed they go through them almost imperiously crossing them off one by one. For instance 'It can be argued that the only answer is state aid . . . if the Houghton Report had been implemented it would have given the party £750,000 last year, but there is virtually no likelihood of the Conservative Government legislating for improved state aid and hence it is another delusion to assume that this can affect our medium-term problems'.

Traditionally, in time of need, the party has sought help from the unions but the Fabian evidence, written with the help of some influential union figures, is pessimistic about this solution. It points out that the unions not only give 85 per cent of national funds (as opposed to a figure of 65 per cent in 1949) but also provide 30 per cent of the constituencies' local retained funds. They also argue that in the past decade three favourable short-term factors have disguised the deterioration in the real value of unions' political funds – the general rise in white colour union membership (albeit in unions like ASTMS with a high level of contracting out of the political levy), the growth in membership of the TGWU, and the doubling in size of NUPE, which has a particularly high political levy and a low level of contracting out.

These three trends are not expected to persist. The Fabians now believe that a decline in total union membership is by no means improbable, given present employment trends, and it is unlikely that total union income will keep much ahead of inflation in the coming decade. Other often-cited solutions include increasing the proportion of levy-paying union members affiliated to the party. For instance, the TGWU leaders only affiliate 1.25m. of its 2m. members. But the Fabians say this device would 'not actually produce any net extra money to the party as a whole. It would simply divert money from the retained balance in political funds or reduce the amount going to local parties'.

Similarly, increasing the actual size of the political levy is unlikely to be productive in the end. A jump in the political levy would encourage organisations such as Aims (the 'free enterprise' lobby) in their union campaigns on 'opting out' that have already had some success in APEX and the TGWU.

> Even more damaging in the long run, a big political levy rise might increase the likelihood of the Tory Government tightening up the law on contracting out in a way which could have disastrous effect on the flow of money into political funds.

The section on the possibility of increasing union contributions concludes that the best that can be hoped for is a 25 per cent increase per affiliated union member to 40p.

The only other chink of light is the possibility of getting more unions, such as Nalgo and the increasingly politically active civil service unions, to affiliate to the party. As yet none of these unions even has political funds, although Nalgo is discussing it.

The Fabians are noticeably pessimistic about the trends in individual membership. Their pessimism is caused by the planned increase in individual subscription fees from the current figure of £1.20 to £5 by January 1981. This increase, the Fabians believe, 'will cause a 25 per cent drop in individual party members without a major and successful recruitment drive'. If that drop does occur the average CLP will only have 300 real members. The Fabians go on to say that the membership-drop and 'the worst of all possible worlds' will occur anyway (recruitment drive or not) if the party does not implement new methods of collection. 'At present the problem is not so much recruiting members but retaining them. And retention depends on an old fashioned system of collection which no longer works'. Indeed the Fabians even go so far as to say, as only those steeped in the Fabian traditions of administrative efficiency could, 'the problem of collection is the key to rebuilding a mass membership'. They propose an annual collection, a central computerised payment system and two-tier membership.

No satisfactory solution to the financial horror story can be found either through loan finance (at commercial rates from the unions' general funds) or by the most sophisticated and skilful use of existing resources. The scale of the expenditure-income imbalance is such that it can only be resolved by getting more individual members and enthusing them with the idea and purpose of being a party member. The Fabians see the main new source of members being the traditional manual unions. They suggest that unions must become recruiting agents for the party, setting aside for the next three years 5 per cent of their political fund income for a recruitment drive and another 5 per cent for political education. At present too much union political money is hoarded until being released at general election time. As a way of encouraging union activists back into Labour Party politics the Fabians recommend the controversial solution of setting up, across the country, a system of workplace branches affiliated to single CLPs.

Judith Cook

Radioactive in Cornwall

MYSTERY SURROUNDS the appearance of Radon gas at the South Crofty mine, near Camborne, in Cornwall. On Tuesday of last week 300 miners walked out over the appearance of the radioactive gas which, by Wednesday, had reached 60 times the permitted American safety level for exposure to it. The miners are asking for protective clothing and anti-dust helmets which filter air. They are also asking for body scans and a full investigation into the 16 cancer deaths which they claim have occurred to miners working on the level at which the gas has now appeared.

Neither management nor the TGWU are willing to comment on the gas or how it arrived. The local secretary of the TGWU says that it appears in mines where workings go through granite in which there are trace elements of uranium but that he knows of no other instance in Cornwall. He also said that the neighbouring Wheal Jane mine showed no such contamination at the same level.

The gas appeared at the 260-foot level known as the East Pool working and the miners are suggesting that somehow the contamination is coming from waste material left behind after the closure of the Government's Chemical Defence Experimental station at Nancekuke in 1978. All the Camborne-Redruth area is riddled with mine workings, some going back to the 18th century, and the East Pool working has tapped into much older tunnels, some of which run either under or alongside the ex-CDE Establishment before coming out on the cliff face beneath.

There has never been any suggestion that radiocative material was handled at Nancekuke but the Ministry of Defence has always gone to extraordinary lengths to conceal what did go on there. Only after a great deal of pressure and publicity given to alleged accidents to personnel at the plant did they admit first that CS gas was manufactured there and then that research into, and manufacture of, a variety of nerve gases was also taking place. The problem of the Radon gas is currently being investigated by the Health and Safety Inspectorate who are not willing to say how long their investigations will go on nor how they think the gas was caused.

The check on the radiation levels at South Crofty mine was made at the suggestion of a consultant at the nearby Treliske hospital in Truro. He approached the union telling them that he was concerned at the number of cancers appearing in South Crofty workers and suggested they checked for radioactivity in the mine, which they did. Confidentially, he has expressed some surprise that, if the contamination is coming from Radon gas, the cancers have appeared in the stomach, intestines and bowels. The construction of Radon gas would lead one to assume it would be inhaled, causing cancer of the lung; but there have been no cases.

Radon contamination causing cancer of the lung is borne out by the most recent American research on industrial cancers and the new ASTMS report, *The Prevention of Occupational Cancer*, gives lung cancer only as the result of Radon contamination. A local geologist has also expressed surprise at the appearance of Radon gas in such quantities and at its being so long-lasting, although there have been traces of it in those particular workings before. He has suggested that traces of Radon might well be masking some other radioactive source which should be investigated.

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GERMANY

Reuben Ainsztein & Francis Wheen

An election victory would return Europe to the 19th Century

The thoughts of chairman Strauss

'THE THOUGHT strikes one', concluded an NS profile of Franz-Joseph Strauss published fifteen years ago, 'that it may not be the Foreign Ministry or even the Chancellorship of West Germany, that Herr Strauss is after, but the Presidency of a United States of Europe in 1980.' Well, 1980 has arrived and Strauss is, after all, the Christian Democratic coalition's candidate for the Chancellorship; yet the 1965 prediction was not so very wrong. Strauss is still the man he always was – a passionate believer in a united, federal Europe, with Germany as the dominant force – and the outcome of his contest against Helmut Schmidt later this year will have enormous significance for both Eastern and Western Europe.

One would not normally consider that residents in the Communist countries of Europe are better informed than Westerners about such an important figure. Compare, however, Brian Crozier's profile of Strauss in *Now!* last month with a thoughtful piece by Adam Krzeminski in a recent issue of the Polish weekly *Polityka*. Crozier's article is a straightforward PR job, lauding Strauss's 'sense of humour', his 'jovial Bavarian grin', his 'mind of rare subtlety and brilliance', his 'impeccably democratic' record, his 'inexhaustible' energy, his 'elegant and intelligent' wife.

Crozier's encomium is undoubtedly the first of many which his co-thinkers will produce during the German election campaign. The New Right always like to have a hero who can be worshipped without reserve, a 'person of destiny' who will build a world fit for Robert Moss. The Shah held this baton for a while before passing it to Milton Friedman, who in turn handed it to Margaret Thatcher. Now we have Strauss: 'He has,' says Crozier, 'the aura of a Churchill or a de Gaulle, of one who awaits a national call.'

The true nature of Strauss's 'national call' is rather different: he does not await it, he inspires it with his atavistic longings for *Reich*. As the article in *Polityka* puts it, he is a demogogue playing on the most dangerous emotions.

IT SHOULD be stressed that the Polish article is not a central committee hand-out: *Polityka* and its editor, Mieczyzlaw Rakowski, have a creditable record of independence – refusing, for instance, to sack their Jewish staff or participate in any way in the anti-semitic purges of 1967-68. The article on Strauss, headed 'Nostalgia for Bismarck', takes as its text a long historical and philosophical essary by Strauss which was published in *Die Welt* last September. Krzeminski comments that 'when a politician begins to write essays on the past, he does not usually do so in order to discover the historical truth, but in order to find in the past a justification for what he is doing in the present.'

Strauss began his essay by reminding his readers that it was exactly forty years since the outbreak of the Second World War. The progression of events from 1914 to 1945 is, to Strauss, obvious: 'In 1914, with the outbreak of the First World War, commenced the decline of Europe from its glorious leading position in the fields of politics, military power, economic predominance and cultural superiority. It reached its tragic nadir at the end of the Second World War, when in April 1945 American and Russian soldiers shook hands at Torgau on the Elbe.' At that point the history of Europe came to an end.

In his search for the causes of the First World War Strauss writes:

> Every explanation that the course of events leading to its outbreak became inevitable as a result of the authoritarian structure of the German Reich, the failures of its middle class, the behaviour of the 'right', the weakness of the liberals, their insufficient collaboration with the working-class movement, the special laws limiting the activities of the Socialists – each of these explanations is nonsensical.

Strauss looks to the geopolitics of the nineteenth century for his explanation. Germany's tragedy, he says, was in its central position in Europe. England sided with Prussia at the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war in 1870 but by the end of it, after the Germans had won and proclaimed the creation of the German Empire, England was already on the side of France. 'Bismarck knew that he had to wrench the Reich, as it were, from the very throats of Germany's neighbours.' The political and military structure of the Reich created by Bismarck resulted from his desire to make it militarily powerful without its armaments policy leading to the creation of a Franco-Russian alliance against the Reich.

Krzeminski's article in *Polityka* challenges Straus on all these points. The misfortune of the Germans, he writes, has not been their central position in Europe, but their conviction that the Reich must be wrenched from the throats of Germany's neighbours – to be more precise, that the Reich must be conquered for Prussia. He continues:

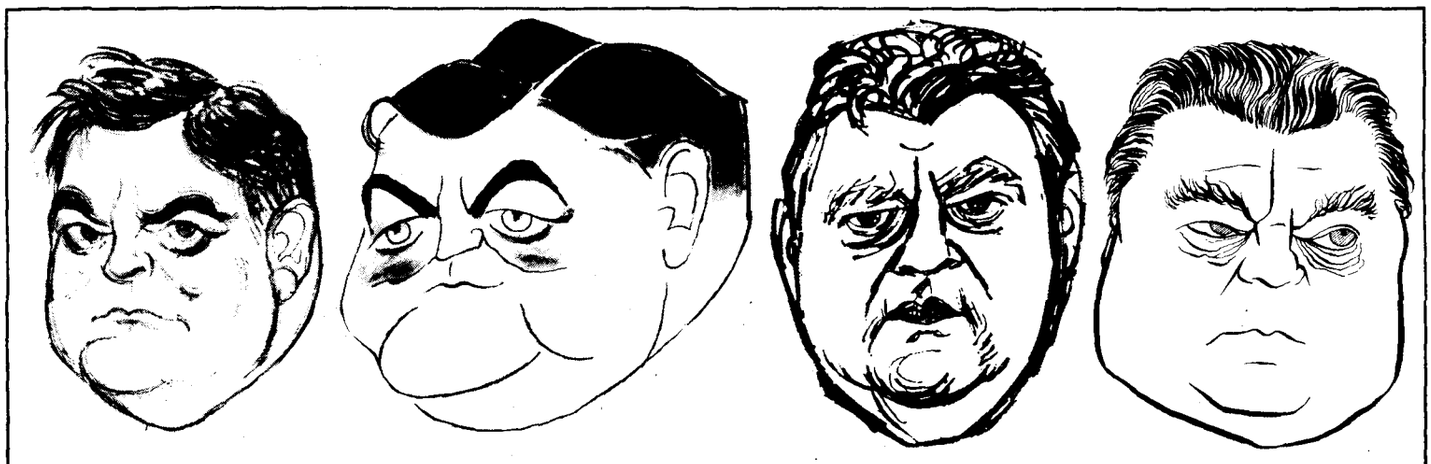
> The tragedy of the Germans – and Europe – has been in the fact that this powerful European nation was not united by the liberal revolution of 1848 but by the reactionary conservative alliance of the Hohenzollerns, army and bureaucracy. Already in the very proclamation of the Reich at Versailles, after the defeat and humiliation of France, one can discern the seeds of its later defeats. One of the sources of the later catastrophe was Bismarck's foreign policy, which made Wilhelmian Germany quite unsuitable for the role of the 'European Middle State' about which Strauss writes such a great deal.

Fascinated by the eagles of the Reich and 'a Europe of powers', Strauss glosses over the fundamental dichotomy of Bismarck's creation: the contradiction between the autocratic system of Wilhelmian Germany and its social and political reality, in which the majority was made up by socialists and liberals. That, argues Krzeminski, was the real and fatal antimony: a powerful economy on the one hand and on the other a pre-democratic system in which the social democratic opposition was treated not as an essential element in parliamentary control of the rulers but as 'an enemy of the Reich' and 'scoundrels without a homeland'.

> A system in which the rulers, instead of discussing with the other elements in the state the need for modernisation, unleashed the *Kulturkampf* and determined from above, as it were, 'the internal enemies' in the shape of socialists, Catholics and the national minorities of Poles and Danes. The result of Bismarck's policies was to destroy the self/confidence of the German middle class, so that it resigned itself to playing a secondary role in the state.

No wonder that Bismarck, that politician for whom Strauss is longing and to whom Kissinger so often refers, was unable to leave a successor who could think for himself.

For Poles, Bismarck's Reich in its role of the German 'Middle State' signified the perpetuation of the Alvensleben Convention of 1863, when Prussia offered Russia military assistance against the Poles who had risen in January against their Russian oppressors. Not



Plus ça change: how the NEW STATESMAN has seen Strauss over the years. Left to right: Vicky 1960; Vicky 1965; Horner 1968; Minnion 1980.

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surprisingly, Krzeminski feels rather strongly about this, arguing that it was done in accordance with Bismarck's 'European' principle, which was defined as follows: 'Beat the Poles that they should lose the will to live. I sympathise with their plight, but if we want to survive then we cannot act otherwise than destroy them.' This quote from Strauss's mentor is particularly ominous in view of a remark made by Strauss himself in the course of an interview with Brian Crozier which accompanied the *Now!* profile. Asked how he would tackle the problem of Soviet military expansion, the former defence minister replies:

> The answer must be to restore the validity of the American security guarantee for Europe by deploying medium range ballistic missiles in Europe itself.

It is noteworthy that later in the same interview, Strauss mentions that 'we must . . . restore a sense of history and historical responsibility' in young people. As Krzeminski shows, Strauss's own historical sense is a distinctly queer one.

AFTER the First World War, Strauss argues, it was the Social Democrats and the Soviet Union that became the evil spirits in Germany's history, while the conservatives became its only bulwark. If anyone caused the Second World War, it was Stalin: 'It is quite untrue,' Strauss wrote in *Die Welt*, 'that Hitler wanted a second world war. But he did want a victorious war of conquest in the West, the conquest of the West and a great, 1,000-year Reich that would be the greatest centre of power in history.'

Being a supporter of Bismarck, but unwilling to embrace Hitler, Strauss does his best to blame the Social Democrats for what happened in 1933. At the same time, the manner in which he presents Hitler – without mentioning his responsibility for genocide, the concentration camps, and his vision of Europe as a continent of masters and slaves – is such that Hitler has become nothing more than a *Realpolitiker* repairing the evil effects of the Versailles treaty. Strauss adds:

> The legend has been deliberately created that Hitler was the executor of Bismarck's will and testament and the continuer of both Bismarck's and Wilhelm II's policies; that he fulfilled the dream of the conservative middle class; that he . . . set out to destroy the Social Democrats who claimed to be the only champions of social and political democracy.

Not so, says Strauss: for socialist ideas were very strong in the National Socialist Party, and who else but the Social Democrats were responsible for that?

Strauss's essay in *Die Welt* provoked a furore in the West German press. *Der Spiegel* devoted its leading article to a refutation, while *Die Zeit* published a series of articles, the theme of which was that Strauss was trying to turn the victims of Nazism into Nazi collaborators in order to gain the votes of the Right.

Naturally public attention this year will be on the battle for the American presidency – and no one would deny that much depends on the outcome. But even Ronald Reagan wishes to take America back only as far as the 1950s. Should Strauss, a blustering demagogue, succeed in toppling the present technocratic Chancellor of West Germany, his aim will be nothing less than a reversion to the nineteenth century. Do the events of 1914 and 1933 really have to be lived through all over again simply to satisfy one man's 'sense of history'?

CZECHOSLOVAKIA
Christopher Hitchens

Another outbreak of over-zealousness by the secret police

Lock up your philosophers

IF THE CZECHOSLOVAK security state has one redeeming feature, it is the ability to make a tremendous variety of enemies. The war of nerves between the Prague secret police and Julius Tomin's seminar has thrown this into sharp relief. The latest recruits to the front line of engagement against arbitrary rule are a large group of Western philosophers and a significant number of young working class Czechs.

Last Wednesday there took place a meeting between Dr Anthony Kenny, Master of Balliol College, Oxford, and Dr Telicka, Minister-Counsellor of the Czechslovak Embassy in London. Dr Kenny, one of whose fellows was recently manhandled in Prague, was asking for clarification about exactly what is and what is not legal for a foreign academic visiting Dr Telicka's fascinating country. Dr Telicka was not, perhaps, as illuminating as he might have been. He failed to enforce a recognisable distinction between the term 'unpopular' and the word 'illegal'. He accused Dr William Newton-Smith (the victim of the manhandling at Tomin's seminar) of 'departing from his prepared text', which raised the insoluble question of how he knew this, and of how it breached the Czechoslovak criminal code. Dr Kenny was unsatisfied, though he was pleased to hear that perhaps the police had been (in the universal language of the total state) 'overzealous'.

Later that same evening, an outbreak of overzealousness infected an entire herd of Czech policemen. Twenty-seven people attending Julius Tomin's seminar were arrested, and eight of these detained for the traditional 48 hours. Among those held were Tomin himself, Professor Radim Palous, Ivan Dejmal (in whose flat the meeting took place), Milos Rejchrt (a spokesman for Charter 77), an industrial worker named Streda and Karel Sling (son of Otto Sling whose show-trial execution in the fifties is now officially regarded as 'a mistake').

The variety of opinions held among this group is very considerable, and gives an impression of the desperately narrow base of ideas on which the Czech regime must rest. Ivan Dejmal, for instance, who has played a leading role in the evolution of the 'Patocka University', is a prominent leftist. He has served successive prison terms, first for his prominence in the banned Revolutionary Socialist Party, and second for 'undermining the morale of the army' into which he was forcibly drafted.

Julius Tomin

So the first group of enemies made by Husak's dictatorship was a wide canvass of Western philosophers. Signatories to a strong letter of protest included (in America) M. V. O. Quine, Tom Nagel and Hilary Putnam, (in Germany) Karl Otto Apel and M. Stegmüller, (in France) Jacques Derrida and Jacques Merleau-Ponty and (in Britain) almost everybody from Ayer to Williams, taking in Quinton, Strawson, Pears and Henderich. It is no disrespect to these eminent academicians (who include many distinguished men of the Left) to say that the Prague regime might have regarded their protest as predictable. The authorities were less prepared for another response inside their own borders.

All those arrested in Prague were also signatories of an appeal on behalf of Petr Cibulka, a young worker imprisoned for his activity in the musical underground (Schweik himself could hardly have improved on that). One hundred and seventy-six young workers in the town of Brno actually took the hazardous step of signing a protest at Cibulka's treatment (his sentence was lengthened when he went on hunger strike) and the stunned authorities responded with a wave of interrogation and beatings. Typical of the victims is Petr Sandora, a worker in a chemical plant, arrested and charged with 'slandering the President of the Republic'. He, and the young men and women with him, have one important thing in common: *they are all too young to have any conscious memory of the 'Prague Spring'.*

Many of them are still in their teens. Others, like Sandora, are in their twenties. Their lives have been lived under the norm of Husak and his Russian backers. Yet they still repudiate the lies and the brutalities of the government, and they are still prepared to attend unofficial philosophy seminars. (Another 'university' in southern Bohemia, run by Jan Litomisky, has attracted police attention because Litomisky signed the petition in support of Cibulka.)

Finally, one correction. It was reported in some papers that Julius Tomin 'resisted arrest' last Wednesday night. In fact, he followed his declared policy of non-cooperation, and as a result was carried passively away (in a state of partial undress). The distinction is worth observing, as are all philosophical distinctions, whether or not the Czech police are capable of understanding them.

Donations for the Patocka University should be addressed to The Secretary, Sub-Faculty of Philosophy, 10 Merton Street, Oxford.

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The nuclear cage

This weekend's anti-nuclear demonstration is an important test of feeling in Britain, at a time when the Think Tank and the Cabinet are reaffirming their faith in nuclear power. The existing plan for rapid nuclear expansion during the 1980s is unsafe, expensive and unnecessary. But the strong and wealthy nuclear lobby have virtually exclusive access to the government, to whom the nuclear strategy appeals, in part, because its adoption will help to break the most powerful industrial unions – the miners and the transport workers. DUNCAN CAMPBELL describes the myths of nuclear power and its uncertain future.

JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS David Howell, the energy minister, told the House of Commons that the government was committed to ordering 15 new nuclear reactors, thus setting the scene for the energy policy of the next two decades. He did not tell the House of Commons that the government had already decided to install the pressurised light water reactor, designed by the US Westinghouse Corporation. This type of reactor is far less safe than other types so far installed in Britain. It is also less reliable than other US designs which have been offered to the UK and, in particular, far worse than the German PWR design by Kraftwerk Union.

As this suggests, the government's decision has been made on grounds which have little to do with energy resources or costs and everything to do with commercial opportunism and the entrenched policies of the civil service-industrial lobby. It is a remarkable concession in particular to Sir Arnold Weinstock, whose company GEC is the leading member of the National Nuclear Corporation – which will build the reactors. Indeed the choice of the Westinghouse PWR has been the spoken and unspoken assumption in the nuclear industry for six years or more because of an equally long-lived assumption that the nuclear industry had to be handed to Weinstock on a plate, as his company is the only one with sufficient capital resources to return to reactor development. Underlying this assumption has been the critical and attractive myth of British energy planning since the Fifties: that ultimately Britain can provide for its energy requirements in isolation through nuclear power. This remains the ideological keystone of government policy despite the discovery of substantial fossil fuel reserves, despite the development of 'alternative' energy sources and despite the enormous and growing concern about the long-term safety of nuclear power.

When the Cabinet's Economic Strategy Committee met in October to review nuclear power policy the NNC proposal was the only one seriously considered. The Corporation was to be reorganised to take over entire responsibility for designing, constructing and commissioning the PWR power stations from the start. According to the minutes of the meeting, which were leaked to the London magazine *Time Out*, 'GEC involvement in the NNC should remain close'; although a supervisory management agreement was to be ended, 'the aim (of the Committee) was the creation of a strong company and management team capable of standing alone.'

THIS DECISION, wholly financed, as it will be, by the government is in the worst traditions of nuclear policy in Britain: formed outside the normal democratic decision-making process and free too from the commercial democracy of the free market. The outcome of such a policy, so far, is that Britain is committed to one of the more unsatisfactory reactor designs[1] which has not performed well in the only other country which has adopted it.

Framatomes, the French consortium set up in the early Seventies, is in the middle of a massive construction programme using the Westinghouse PWR design. However, difficulties in building the reactors properly have led to significant cracking in pipework and reactor vessels. Their determination to cover up these flaws and operate the stations regardless is causing dismay even among British nuclear enthusiasts; the outcome may well be a nuclear accident that will dwarf Harrisburg.

[1]Recent work by John Surrey and John Chesshire of the Sussex University Science Policy Research Unit has shown that the best reactor design overall is the Canadian model using natural uranium fuel and heavy water as a coolant; the *CANDU* reactor.

At the moment one French station, Bugey I, is operating with cracks breaching the walls between separate cooling circuits, thus spreading radioactive material from the reactor core throughout the normally clean generating side of the plant. At least two further reactors, Tricastin and Gravelines (just on the other side of the channel, like a host of others still under construction) have even more disturbing cracks, in pipes carrying cooling water to and from the reactor itself. These cracks have penetrated to a depth of over 6mm (about ¼ inch) and extend across the pressure plates which hold pipes onto the reactor core. If they spread – and there is every likelihood they can – then the famous worst case 'loss of coolant accident' (LOCA) is definitely on the cards.

The French government say the cracks are safe for five to six years, after which time robots can do the repair work – but outside observers regard this policy as madness and the French unions have, for the time being, refused to load fuel into Gravelines and Tricastin. In Britain, the National Nuclear Inspectorate would never tolerate such behaviour from the nuclear industry but the NNI's ability to supervise new developments is already gravely threatened by staff shortages[2] and they face a government determined to have nuclear power, whatever the cost.

[2]See NS 7 December 1979.

Fiddling the figures

Forecasting on the basis of supply, not demand, is an intrinsic flaw in official energy policy. It derives from the structural bias in favour of suppliers like the CEGB, Electricity Council, UKAEA, British Gas and so on. No institution exists to promote conservation or to minimise energy demand, discoupled from economic growth.

The major study is the Energy Policy green paper of 1978. Its forecast for the year 2000, is consumption of 560 million tons of coal or its equivalent (mtce) in other energy sources. This figure was based on the assumption of economic growth of 3 per cent a year, with various (questionable) assumptions about the development of different sectors of the economy.

According to the green paper, indigenous sources could only supply 475-515 mtce of this amount. Although the paper included a 'low growth' case with demand of 450 mtce, this was not seen as 'particularly credible' and would involve lower living standards and unemployment. The 'gap' – to be filled by imported oil – was therefore from 45 to 85 mtce, depending on how much gas British Gas could get out of the North Sea.

These forecasts accommodated the necessary lobbies. The 'energy gap' (– 'policy gap' – 'shortfall') was required to persuade the public that the chosen energy developments were necessary. Both the nuclear lobby and the NCB with its 'Plan for Coal' had to be accommodated. The NCB envisaged output rising to 180 million tons by the end of the century but by then the planned nuclear capacity of 400 would be squeezing it out of power stations. To cope with the coal surplus, Substitute Natural Gas was proposed; but this was a myth, as British Gas were confident of meeting the entire demand from natural gas and planned no investment in ENG. As energy minister Tony Benn favoured renewable energy sources, – wind, wave and tidal power – but these were allocated a minor role, providing 10 mtce by 2000.

The 1979 outlook was rather different. Three per cent growth forecasts were untenable. As the table shows, the figures have changed dramatically. With the Tories in power the 'Plan for Coal' and renewable energy sources have gone; nuclear power remains inviolate. British Gas's estimates of substantially larger North Sea reserves (70 trillion cubic feet instead of 55) could no longer be ignored; ENG received lip-service only.

To satisfy the North Sea oil operators, who wanted liberalisation from BNOC, taxation and exploration restrictions, a lower estimate of minimum oil reserves was called for. At a stroke these were cut from 3000 to 2400 million tonnes, on the basis of 'very conservatively' assessing the new reserves likely to be found. This enabled the indigenous oil supply in 2000 to be cut by one third from 150 to 100 mtce. The energy gap was retained and the nuclear segment remained intact.

However, to get this answer, the Department of Energy had to tell the NCB to produce less coal than planned, British Gas to sell less gas than planned and to write off renewable energy sources altogether. Parameters had to tinkered with: despite lower economic growth, the use of oil in transport was boosted by 10 per cent by assuming cars to be less efficient and energy demand in the domestic and commercial sectors was expected to grow by more than previously imagined.

The nuclear forecast of 95 mtce in the year 2000 assumes a nuclear capacity of 37 to 40 GW. That would require ordering another 20 to 25 reactors before 1992 – double the present ordering programme. Once again, the forecast is out of step with reality.

Pat Coyne and Duncan Campbell

Energy supply	1978[1]	1979 high[2]	1979 low
Nuclear/hydro	95	95	88
Coal	170	155	137
Gas	50-90	65	62
Indigenous oil	150	100	100
Renewable sources	10	0	0
Energy Gap	85-45	120	35
Total demand	560	510	445

[1] [2]*Sources: 1978 green paper on Energy Policy, Cmnd 7101; Energy Projections 1979, DoE, October 1979.*

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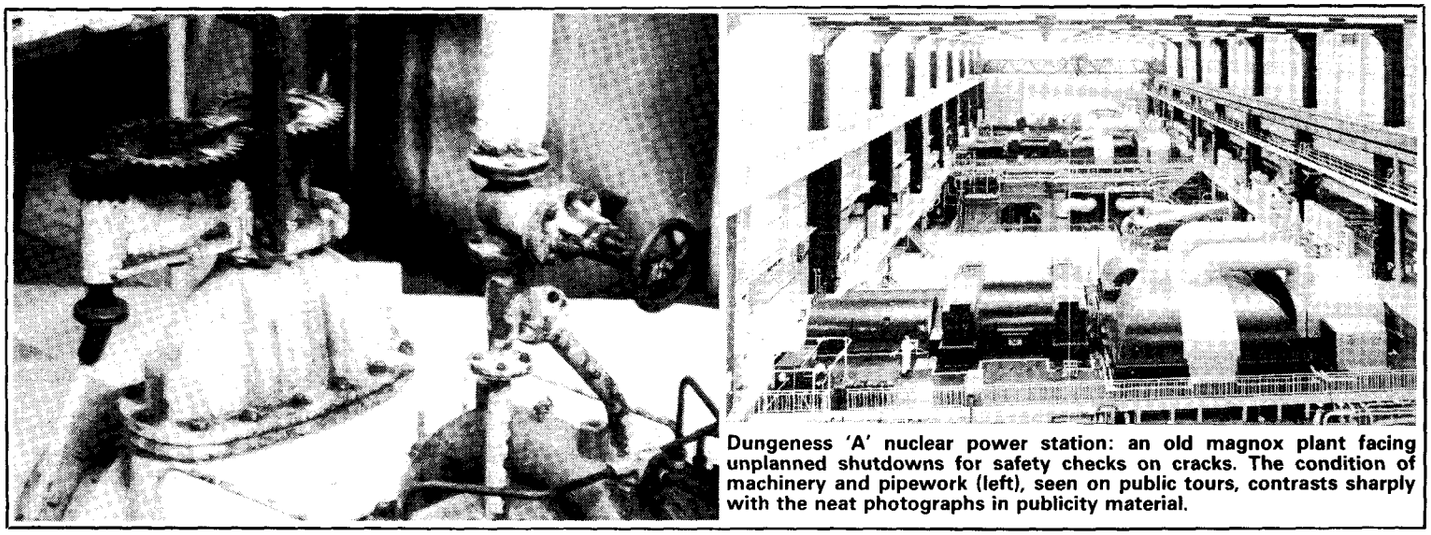

Peter Lennard

Dungeness 'A' nuclear power station: an old magnox plant facing unplanned shutdowns for safety checks on cracks. The condition of machinery and pipework (left), seen on public tours, contrasts sharply with the neat photographs in publicity material.

Howell has accepted his department's brief on nuclear power as 'essential to the nation's long-term needs', but the reasoning behind this brief is seriously flawed. The department has, apparently, abandoned the 'energy gap', on which nuclear policy was justified throughout the Seventies in favour of the claim that nuclear power will be cheaper than other fuels. Unfortunately, the Cabinet paper said to prove this is classified, but the history of the 'energy gap' – in which figures were endlessly juggled to justify already decided policies – does not instill confidence (see box). And even though the 'energy gap' – and its successor the 'policy gap' – have been phased out in departmental forecasts, nuclear industry propaganda still proclaims that 'independent experts' forecast an 'energy gap'. The February 1978 Green Paper featured a 'policy gap' first appearing in the late Eighties, swelling to a shortage equivalent to 45m. tons of coal by the end of the century. Absurdly, there can never be a 'gap' between supply and demand in a free economy as marginal costs of energy will rise until supply meets demand: in the eleven years of the Green Paper's gap there is plenty of time for this to happen in the market, or for new energy supplies to be brought on stream.

Indeed, if the planning and modelling assumptions of the Department of Energy and its chief forecaster, Frank Hutbury, were to be published, they would probably look like this: first, decide how much nuclear energy you want to supply; second, determine how large a 'gap' is necessary to get the minister, Parliament and the public thinking your way; thirdly, adjust the parameters of your model to give a reasonable answer on all the other factors. A good example of this method in practice is the Electricity Council's introduction last year of the Economy 7 electricity tariff for low cost off-peak loads during the night. For misleading advertising the Council was successfully hauled before the Advertising Standards Authority. The Council was trying to win back lost custom from British Gas, but more importantly wanted to build up off-peak demand, to justify and absorb the increased base output which an expanded British nuclear programme would imply.

AT THE MOMENT nuclear power accounts for something between 10 to 14 per cent of electricity capacity. This will rise to almost 20 per cent when the stations under construction are completed. At any level above this nuclear power would be supplying rather more than the minimum base load of the electricity grid. This raises many problems, some of them serious.

Because of the high capital costs but lesser running costs nuclear stations normally supply the 'base load' which meets the minimum demand for electricity and are, as far as possible, not switched off except for planned maintenance. If more than 20 per cent nuclear electricity is put into the system, some of the stations may have to 'load follow' at less than their full power. This raises costs and decreases efficiency. It also increases the risk of an accident, particularly on the American-style PWRs. As the output of the reactor is adjusted to meet demand, this places additional stress on components as they heat up and cool down. Under such conditions, flaws in the metalwork will spread more rapidly, especially in the PWR where the reactor vessel itself is made of metal.

However, the new proposals – to install 15 GW of electricity by the year 2000 – are far more modest than previous projections. In 1976 one 'official strategy' was to install 104 GW. If the industrial stagnation which has caused this scaling down continues for a few more years need for nuclear power may disappear completely. To get the nuclear programme under way the Tory government is already trying to cut vital corners.

The CEGB intend to start work on the first Westinghouse PWR during 1982 but need, first, approval from the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate for their design. Howell has asked for this to be done in two years. But the Health and Safety Executive say the work cannot be done in less than three years and the Inspectors themselves, seriously hit by understaffing, say even longer will be needed. Thus, the NII's report could well not be available until at least mid-1983. Even now, the CEGB has not handed its designs over for the NII to start work. There is now a disturbing suggestion that this essential independent reporting is one of the corners the government intends to cut. The Health and Safety Executive has secretly been seeking Treasury approval to pay £½m. to the UKAEA to subcontract the NII's work.

After the NII approval, the CEGB needs planning permission. It intends to bypass one of the hurdles by erecting the first PWR at an existing nuclear site – for which permission in principle for further reactors has already been granted. And it hopes that the public inquiry into the PWR design itself can be held simultaneously with the NII examination – even though the NII report would be essential to any genuine objective inquiry. The minute of Howells' October Cabinet presentation notes

> the *danger* that a broad ranging inquiry would arouse prolonged technical debate between representatives of different facets of scientific opinion.

Mrs Thatcher has already indicated her attitude to public inquiries: the fast breeder, for example, would be subject to just one inquiry, instead of the two previously planned – into first the principles of the fast breeder project, and then into the first selected site. Indeed, Mrs Thatcher summed up the cabinet meeting:

> (The Government recognises) the great importance of appropriate presentation for achieving the government's objective, and generally favoured a low profile approach.

Nevertheless, even on the unlikely assumption that the NII report is available in 1982, the PWR public inquiry will not be reporting until late 1983: a date inconveniently close to the next election. Until then there is little scope for speeding up the nuclear programme. Work on the two new advanced gas cooled reactors has now virtually ground to a halt. Their capacity is now clearly not needed at all, and would result in closing down cheaper running stations in the late '80s.

This week, the cabinet decided once again to press on with these reactors on the grounds that the nuclear industry would finally collapse without them, and be unable to recover when – or rather if – a PWR programme started. This decision is another remarkable folly.

The AGRs already in existence have, without exception, been costly failures. The programme started in 1964, with five new plants: Hinckley Point, in north Devon, Hunterston near Ayr, Dungeness in Kent, Hartlepool in the north-east, and Heysham in Lancashire. The latter two were sited considerably nearer population centres than had previously been allowed. Dungeness B was originally planned to cost £80m. but the bill will, in fact, run to more than £500m. It was meant to be operating ten years ago; the CEGB say it should start this year – a claim discarded as the usual rosy fiction by site engineers to whom we have spoken. The first reactor might just be ready by late 1981; the second will be doing well if it starts during 1982.

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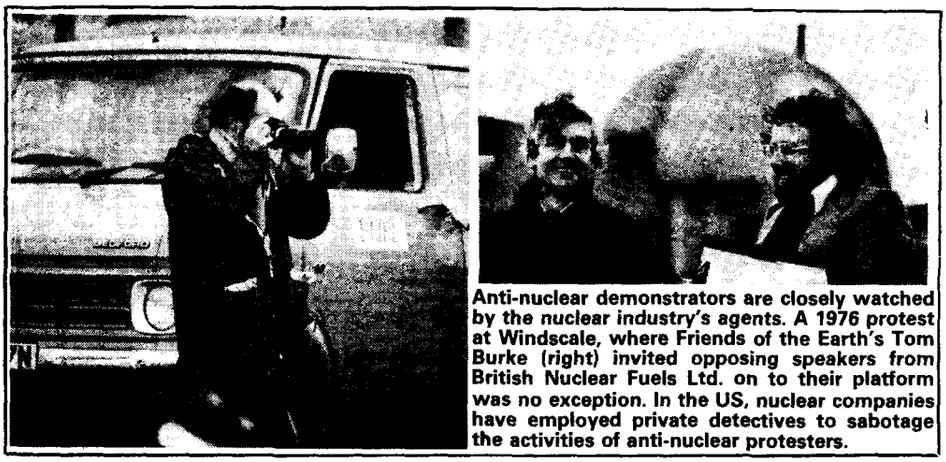

Anti-nuclear demonstrators are closely watched by the nuclear industry's agents. A 1976 protest at Windscale, where Friends of the Earth's Tom Burke (right) invited opposing speakers from British Nuclear Fuels Ltd. on to their platform was no exception. In the US, nuclear companies have employed private detectives to sabotage the activities of anti-nuclear protesters.

Only Hinkley Point is going at all; Hunterston suffered a celebrated accident in 1977 when mis-operation filled the reactor vessel with seawater from the Clyde. At Heysham and Hartlepool new long-life boilers are being installed following an NII ruling that the original low-cost, replaceable boilers would have to be sealed in, and thus be irreplaceable. Neither of these stations are likely to be operating until the middle of the decade.

Other problems have hit the AGRs as a whole: each station has had its output reduced by 20 per cent because of corrosion and other problems. The likely cost of AGR electricity has been privately said to be 1.8p per unit – well in excess of the present cost of oil-fired plant at 1.31p, although the only published figure puts the cost of Hinkley Point at 1.3p It therefore remains something of a mystery how the Department of Energy can be satisfied with the 'robustness' of its calculations of the cost of PWR electricity. When we asked the department for the detailed calculations offered to the Cabinet they refused.

THE 'NEED' FOR nuclear power is, then, shaky; as is one's confidence in the manufacturing industry's capacity to deliver. The opposition to nuclear power as such centres on four arguments:

- The risk of a major accident, involving the loss of much of the reactor's contents. In terms of the tens of thousands dead and billions of pounds worth of damage to property, this is comparable in radiological terms to a medium-sized atom bomb.
- A similar risk with radioactive wastes: there is no proven method of disposal over the very long timescales involved;
- The long-term effects of the build-up of radioactivity in the environment:
- The increased dangers in transporting and reprocessing the substantial amounts of plutonium involved in a fast breeder electronuclear economy.

A major area of argument concerns the effect of low or 'chronic' levels of radiation exposure on body tissues. These effects appear only after long – or very long – periods of time as diseases such as cancer or leukaemia. Measuring the connection between cancer and radiation exposure is difficult, as whole populations are needed to establish even approximate long-term effects. But in one important area, the nuclear lobby is losing the argument, about the safety of 'safety limits' of radiation exposure.

One view of cell biology says that damage done at levels of radiation below the accepted safety limits is sufficiently low for the cell repair mechanism to cope. The other view is that one radioactive disintegration may destroy one cell and one cell may start a cancer at a particular probability. In other words, the incidence of cancer at low levels would increase linearly with exposure. On this hypothesis, there is *no* safety level – the 'safety levels' merely define socially acceptable death and injury levels. So the argument has shifted from proving safety levels to the *ethics of risks in society: coal mining deaths vs* nuclear power deaths, for example. On this the nuclear apologists have come badly unstuck.

In a 1978 Dimbleby lecture Lord Rothschild dealt with the subject of 'risk' at length, quoting a report on the mortality rates of various energy sources by the Canadian Atomic Energy Control Board scientist Dr Herbert Inhaber. Inhaber had calculated the likely deaths for a given energy output of 10 GW for a year: gas (1-4 deaths); nuclear (2½-15 deaths) and wind (230-700).

Rothschild's lecture was then reprinted in the Atomic Energy Authority's glossy magazine *Atom*, complete with pictures of the villain of the piece – a murderous little Mediterranean windmill.

But according to Professor John Holdren of Berkeley, whose work on wind energy Inhaber had used, the report was 'shockingly incompetent and inaccurate'. For example, he confused the weight of windmill components by a factor of 2000 (by mixing up pounds weight with tons) and after other errors, got the wind energy death toll at least 100 times too high.

A particular fabrication of the UK Atomic Energy Authority has been often repeated by energy ministers: if an individual moved from living near a nuclear plant to avoid an early death from accident or exposure and in so doing moved more than 300 yards further from work, then the increased risk from a road accident in commuting would equal the risk of continuing to live near a nuclear power station. Recently Energy Minister Norman Lamont told a meeting in Cardiff that the UKAEA had shown that this was the level of risk to the general population from the operation of nuclear reactors. This is untrue: the UKAEA study merely contrasted their own 'suggested' nuclear power design mortality rate of one death per million people a year with other UK fatality rates.

A better measure of the risk involved is to consider the nuclear industry's own attitude to insurance. In both Britain and America legislation uniquely restricts the operator's liability for nuclear power accidents. In Britain the 1959 Nuclear Installations (Licensing and Insurance) Act limits the liability of operators to £5m. with a further £45 million from the government. This removes from the nuclear industry a significant financial burden faced by all other competing sources of energy. If the nuclear industry had to carry the full risk and cost of a nuclear accident, starting up business would be economically unfeasible: £50m. is a drop in the ocean so far as an accident is concerned.

The *tour de force* of the safety debate was the giant Rasmussen Report prepared in 1976 for the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The report attempted to allocate probabilities to each type of possible nuclear failure: the worst accident involved 2300 immediate deaths and damage of $6.2bn. Rasmussen's work was severely criticised and at the revision stage some estimates were more than doubled. Still the conclusion was that there was a probability of only one accident per billion years of reactor use.

In the event, two accidents have shown Rasmussen's 'probability tree' analysis technique to be fatally flawed. At Brown's Ferry in Alabama in 1976 a whole duct of wiring burnt out, making all three of the 'emergency core cooling systems' inoperative. The probability of this event repeating itself when the reactor was in danger of meltdown was the *cube root* of what Rasmussen suggested. And at Harrisburg, a series of separate events – each of which had a very low probability – brought the reactor within an hour of the worst of all 'credible' disasters, the LOCA. The recent US Kemeny Report on this brought about a six-month moratorium on reactor construction while the safety of the PWR is reconsidered.

IN BRITAIN the evangelists of nuclear power are undeterred. The UKAEA response to the Kemeny Report was a half page of irritated flannel, worthy of the chief nuclear apostle Sir John Hill who, in a lecture celebrating the 25th birthday of the UKAEA last year, said:

> The public doesn't and cannot be expected to understand the issues of nuclear power in other than the very broadest terms.

Academics 'genuinely searching for the truth' might be acceptable, but there were others whose search was illegitimate:

> Individuals with strongly held views have encouraged young students possessing the energy and idealism of our heritage to follow false crusades against industrial society and have used the nuclear industry as a convenient target.

The second apostle of the nuclear industry is Sir Francis Tombs, chairman of the Electricity Council. Earlier this year the *Electrical Review* published a major article criticising electricity forecasting and the 'gap' mythology by two researchers from SPRU at Sussex University. Tombs summarily banned the paper from the Electricity Council offices and cancelled the Council's contribution to SPRU. On another occasion he threatened to withdraw all electricity advertising from IPC magazines because of an article in *Woman's Own* which was critical of nuclear power.

Unsurprisingly, the CEGB has more than its fair share of nuclear enthusiasts. The board member for planning, John Jukes, was until recently ordering an assumption of 2½ per cent growth despite the evidence of his own eyes and the advice of his staff. This figure has been reduced twice in the last six months, latterly to 1 per cent at the Vale of Beauvoir

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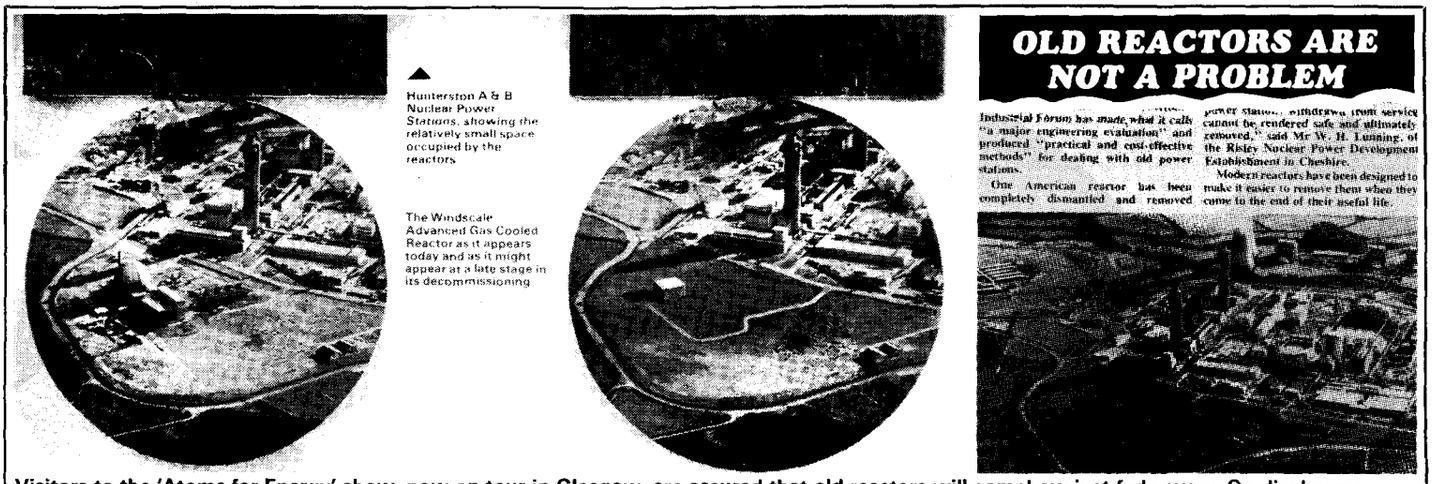
OLD REACTORS ARE NOT A PROBLEM
Industrial Forum has made what it calls "a major engineering evaluation" and produced "practical and cost-effective methods" for dealing with old power stations.
One American reactor has been completely dismantled and removed
power station... withdrawn from service cannot be rendered safe and ultimately removed," said Mr W. H. Lunning, of the Risley Nuclear Power Development Establishment in Cheshire.
Modern reactors have been designed to make it easier to remove them when they come to the end of their useful life.

Hunterston A & B Nuclear Power Stations, showing the relatively small space occupied by the reactors

The Windscale Advanced Gas Cooled Reactor as it appears today and as it might appear at a late stage in its decommissioning

Chris Schwarz/Time Out

Visitors to the 'Atoms for Energy' show, now on tour in Glasgow, are assured that old reactors will somehow just fade away. On display are before and after 'decommissioning' pictures of the Windscale AGR. Only a small concrete lump is left; when the visitor leaves, with a publicity leaflet, however, even the concrete block has conveniently, if unconvincingly, faded away.

inquiry.

More extreme advocates of nuclear power can be found in other spheres – astonomer Sir Fred Hoyle thinks that nuclear opposition derives from 'Kremlin-inspired instructions' and the Institute for the Study of Conflict, the right-wing lobby group with close connections to US and British intelligence services, notes in a recent publication:

> Moscow . . . in the last analysis . . . stands to gain.

The shrillness of such remarks should not be allowed to disguise the important political dimension of nuclear power. The Thatcher nuclear future is the antithesis of everything the government claims to stand for: it is corporatist, wholly government planned and financed; it provides no scope for enterprise as the risks are more than free enterprise capitalism would bear. But, so far, Britain – along with the Soviet Union and France – has avoided the political confrontation which has, in states such as Germany, Sweden and the US, halted the nuclear advance. By 1983/4, when the turf is out for the first PWR, probably at Sizewell in Norfolk, the 'low profile' approach may, however, have run its course.

Last October David Howell spelled out the key advantage of nuclear power for the government:

> (The nuclear) programme would not reduce the long term requirement for coal. But (it) would have the advantage of removing a substantial portion of electricity production from the dangers of disruption by industrial action by coal miners or transport workers.

Soon there will be government proposals to remove the right to strike from nuclear power plant workers, as France has already done. But now, for the first time, a major Anti-Nuclear Campaign (ANC) embraces the interests of the labour movement, rather than merely environmental concern. Although headed by the Yorkshire miners' leader Arthur Scargill, the campaign amounts to more than a defence of miners' jobs: nuclear power will leave unrealised employment opportunities in conservation programmes or, say, the utilisation of waste heat from power stations as combined heat and power (CHP). This Saturday's anti-nuclear demonstration will be a major test of the depth and strength of support for the anti-nuclear movement.

THE FIRST BATTLEFIELDS are remote. Torness, a windswept coastal outcrop in south-east Scotland, is the first new site for nuclear power development. Last year 4000 people took over the site for a day and another occupation is planned for this spring – but Torness is a long way from the highly populated south, if not from Edinburgh. At Heysham – where a second AGR is on order – local tolerance has been won to some extent in contrast with Torness. If, as rumoured, the safety reports on Heysham A, Dungeness and Hartlepool show the new AGRs to have disturbing flaws, the opposition may be rekindled. Otherwise, and in the absence of a major accident, most opposition is likely to crystallise around the site of the first PWR.

The anti-nuclear campaigners face a considerable disadvantage. They do not have access to massive funds for propaganda, pro-nuclear writers have attempted to criminalise their activities and impugne their motives with red smears. The Security Service (MI5) have become increasingly involved in surveying and infiltrating the anti-nuclear movement. A chance pointer to such intelligence interest was the publication of the report on 'Nuclear Protest and Violence' by the ISC. Already the nuclear industry has been granted astonishing

Nuclear nonsense

THE NUCLEAR INDUSTRY's propaganda efforts have been loud, long and insistent. In the late sixties it was 'Atoms for Peace' – a line which CND and the left supported. Now it is 'Atoms for Energy'. An exhibition of the same name, organised by the new joint publicity organisation, the Nuclear Power Information Group, is currently touring Britain at considerable cost, stopping off at provincial cities – it is in Glasgow at the moment – marketing the view that 'we must have nuclear power' to an audience largely composed of school children. At Newcastle, for instance, 150 schools were shepherded into the exhibition in a fortnight. The show puts forward a bland mixture of fact and falsehood for junior consumption, with all the old unchallengeable authority that a scientific display normally commands. Here we examine some of these statements. All quotations are taken directly and in context from leaflets or captions to the show.

Independent experts predict that without nuclear power expansion Britain will face a large energy gap by the turn of the century . . . there would be fewer jobs and declining living standards.

Repeated requests to the NPIG for the names of these 'independent experts' have been fruitless. The only name supplied is that of Sir Fred Hoyle, an astronomer with declared extreme pro-nuclear views.

Nuclear energy is the only new source of power which is available on a large scale at the right time.

The 'old' fossil fuel sources are presently predicted to be in surplus well into the nineties. Conservation measures and alternative energy sources could be developed at least as fast if resources were not wholly diverted to nuclear power which can only provide electricity, a very small proportion of overall energy requirements.

Nuclear power . . . produces electricity more cheaply than fossil fuels.

The only published figures are for magnox reactors, which show nuclear power is 20 per cent cheaper. But these figures omit significant costs in building and starting the stations. The new generation of AGR reactors are likely to produce electricity 50 per cent dearer. No figures have been published for these reactors and the Department of Energy refuse to publish the basis on which these and similar claims have been made.

We can avoid . . . an energy crisis by expanding nuclear power . . . so that it becomes the backbone of the electricity supply system.

Even as the backbone, nuclear energy cannot supply more than the base load, without increasing costs and risk. With 300 years of supply, coal could clearly be used to avoid any such 'energy crisis'.

Power that's safer than houses – if you lived next door to a nuclear power station you would have less chance of being killed by its operations than if you smoked just one cigarette a year.

This takes no account of nuclear accidents on any scale and is based on questionable estimates of the cancer rates caused by low level 'routinely emitted' radiation. It ignores the fact that we can choose not to smoke, but cannot choose not to have a nuclear power station in the vicinity.

Old reactors are not a problem. It might take about 12 years to restore the area occupied by a reactor to a green field that people could normally use.

This problem seems to be solved by painting unwanted reactors out of photographs (see illustration). The display shows a concrete casement left after decommissioning the Windscale PWR reactor. In a leaflet this has disappeared. such brushwork does not explain how radioactive works and waste will be disposed of, or the work and cost involved.

Waste is a problem that can be solved. All high level waste accumulated since the beginning of Britain's nuclear programme would occupy no more space than a large four bedroomed detached house.

This is a sizeable pile indeed – 180,000 cubic feet and by 2000 a modest palace would suffice. But the waste is only prevented from doing more damage by being kept in thick walled tanks, each with seven independent cooling systems; and still it leaks out.

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powers: the UKAEA Constabulary is a private police force unaccountable to parliament, with powers to be permanently armed, to search, arrest and detain on any suspicion at all when nuclear material is involved. The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution suggested that the

> Activities (of nuclear security services) might include the use of informers, infiltrators, wiretapping, checking on bank accounts and the opening of mail (concerning) members of the public and possibly of employees who might make 'undesirable' contacts . . .

Last year, for example, two press photographers at Windscale's new reprocessing plant were summarily ordered into the back of a Land-Rover by site guards carrying revolvers and detained for several hours to be questioned. The threat to liberty is also present now in a decision-making process which takes place behind closed doors, kept from Parliament and the public. These factors, needless to say, are not mentioned in the official balance sheets which contrast coal and nuclear power.

It is not as though there is no alternative: a low energy strategy for Britain is wholly feasible. The obstacle is not a scarcity of resources, but forecasts and mythologies born of entrenched views and vested interests. The International Institute for Environment and Development's report by Gerald Leach on alternative energy policies, published in 1978, demolished many of the key myths – especially the economic 'law' that GIP was related to energy use – and showed that the bleak belt-tightening forecasts of a low energy society are needless inventions. It suggested that there was no reason to believe the nuclear technocrats who said they could provide all the energy, nor was there any need to turn to bicycles and heavy woollies, or to a land covered with windmills. We could survive quite well, the report argued, by improving the energy efficiency of buildings, vehicles and power stations (including a few nuclear ones; Leach's stance was not anti-nuclear). His forecasts for energy consumption in 2000 were for the same usage as today – way below the Department of Energy's, even though the assumptions on economic growth were then the same.

THIS VISION CONTRASTS sharply with the interests of the Electricity Council and the supply industries: to justify the nuclear programme, it needs new markets. This is reminiscent of the situation 20 years ago when the first magnox stations were about to come on stream. To encourage demand, energy saving was abandoned in official guidance in buildings; councils and individuals were encouraged to install electric storage heaters. For housing, and for many of today's tenants, the policy was a disaster. Unable to afford electricity by the early 70s, people turned to paraffin heaters, drenching their homes in ruinous condensation.

This mistake is about to be repeated and electricity prices will have to rise steeply to pay for the £12 billion investment programme which the government plans in the ten years from 1982. The reactor chosen – the Westinghouse PWR – is going to cause other difficulties too. Westinghouse themselves are in severe financial difficulties, hit by the post-Harrisburg embargo and a nuclear recession worldwide. But in addition most of their previous customers are suing them for failure to deliver the promised uranium fuel for the reactors. Westinghouse's mistake was not to plan for the cartel of uranium suppliers, largely orchestrated by Britain's RTZ, which has forced up prices enormously. Westinghouse failed to deliver, the utilities have sued and the company tried to counter-sue RTZ. If RTZ and the utilities win, Britain will be buying a reactor from a company which may go bust and, furthermore, a company which the British government helped defeat in a British law suit against RTZ two years ago.

For its part, RTZ is understandably unpopular in the nuclear industry. Unannounced, a new body – the Civil Uranium Procurement Executive – has been formed to counter the cartel. Its members are BNFL, the CEGB and the South of Scotland Electricity Board and its plan is to stock up during the uranium surplus years of the Eighties and Nineties. Such a surplus will occur despite the arguments of the fast breeder lobbyists.

Elsewhere in the nuclear scenery, the Uranium Institute has brought together suppliers and consumers in a new body, with its headquarters in London. Its chairman, Dr Heinrich Mandel, director of the German Westphalian electricity supply company, had the following to say at their last symposium in July 1978:

> (The American Non-proliferation Act) is a potential problem . . . But the Act has left some loopholes. The industry should study these closely. The Institute will certainly be doing so. The industry will regard US willingness to use flexibility within the act. . . as an important test of the political temperature.

He went on to deplore the current procedures for licensing nuclear power stations as 'an economic and political nonsense' which was 'intolerable . . . when one is planning investments in nuclear power programmes involving billions of dollars.' The British members of the Institute – which include UKAEA, BNFL, the CEGB and RTZ – would no doubt now dissociate themselves from such extreme sentiments but equally there is no doubt that Mandel reflects accurately the global nuclear industry's motif.

IN PUBLIC WE are told nuclear generation can be achieved safely and will provide the cheapest source of electricity. But how certain, how 'robust' are these claims? The Department of Energy says they are; the CEGB told them; the CEGB got their studies from the NNC/NPC, who will make the reactors. The NNC got their designs and costs from Westinghouse who are naturally keen to sell their designs. The particular design chosen (every successive reactor is modified a little bit more) was the Westinghouse 1100MW reactor at Trojan, Oregan. This was a very unfortunate choice, as Trojan has been a laggard in a mediocre field of nuclear runners. In 1977/78 it was placed 135th in the *Nuclear Engineering International* league table of performance, with an operating efficiency of less than 30 per cent of that planned.

Such a performance shortfall would make nuclear power grossly more expensive than coal produced electricity even on optimistic official assumptions. And although the CEGB hotly dispute numerous independent claims that the difference is already at best marginal, its own figures show the weakness of its case. Currently, magnox electricity is 1.02p per unit (kilowatt hour) – claimed to be the cheapest in the system. But the magnox stations are so old that the figure has no predictive value and sizeable costs – such as disposing of nuclear waste or reactor dismantling – are omitted, or hazily estimated. Interest charges during construction and government finance for R&D are also excluded.

More to the point, such AGR generated electricity as there is is now said to cost 1.3p a unit – compared with 1.29p for coal and 1.31p for oil. Costs at the new AGR stations will be much higher and CEGB specialists have told private seminars that the present real cost of AGR electricity is nearer 1.8p than 1.3p – 40 per cent costlier than coal. Such costings, together with the government requirement that the CEGB finances its capital intensive programme entirely by itself, guarantees higher electricity prices in the 1980s. Every scrap of evidence from the past casts severe doubt upon the official view that it will be cheaper even in the long term. Not one nuclear power station in this country operates to specification or was completed on time or to cost. The proposed PWR programme involves a completely new reactor of which Britain has no design, construction or operating experience.

The nuclear consensus is beginning, finally, to falter. Formally, TUC policy is steered by the supply industry dominated Fuel and Power committee but recent scraps between Frank Chapple and Moss Evans are indicative of the dissolution. Last year's TUC welded opposing resolutions on nuclear power into a statement demanding something for every interest group. This year, the debate should be a real one. Having supported a much larger nuclear programme the Labour Party is somewhat compromised – but the NEC will shortly be debating a proposal to call for a US style moratorium.

The major stumbling block to new thinking is the institutional impregnability of the nuclear industry. Having lost many of its jobs to the Ministry of Defence and British Nuclear Fuels, the UKAEA – financed by £140 million of taxpayers money every year – now exists as little more than a publicly funded propaganda organisation for nuclear power (since 1970 it has dropped its forecasts of the extent of nuclearisation in the year 2000 from 145GW to 20GW).

It is clearly wasteful, not to say a disservice to democracy for the AEA to continue to exist – especially as its research establishment at Harwell carries out much of the official research on 'alternative' sources of energy, which it then claims to be 'unsuccessful'.

Nuclear technology critically affects the way we live and conduct our affairs. As the technological argument for nuclear power has collapsed, the political questions have occupied the centre of the stage. Who should take the risks in society and for whom? Do we get a centralist, corporatist and repressive state, or a free democracy? A wholesale commitment to nuclear energy would deplete other resources but concentrate the power of the corporatist lobby.

Paradoxically the way out may be in the nuclear industry's own hands. Clearly there is an inbuilt capacity for (metaphorical) self destruction: history points to a slow and grinding halt to the demand for nuclear power in the west. But it may take at least another decade. By 1984 however it should be clear whether any of the present British nuclear programme continues to be politically, economically or socially feasible.

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Between Vietnam and Pol Pot

There is still scattered fighting throughout Cambodia, reports ANTHONY BARNETT. There is also a deeper sense of insecurity. How much does this spring from a fear of Pol Pot's return; from opposition to a foreign army posted across the land; or from the knowledge that Pol Pot himself is a Khmer nationalist?

CAMBODIANS DO NOT SAY they were liberated by the Vietnamese, but they speak without strain or falseness of their liberation, and they know what made this possible. At present the Vietnamese army is accepted, as a fact of life and as a massive guard against the return of Pol Pot. Unarmed Vietnamese mingle in the markets, lone Vietnamese soldiers can be seen on foot patrol in a road full of Khmer on bikes – inconceivable if there were active hostility between the two peoples. But it is clear that the Vietnamese feel themselves to be foreigners, in a strange land; they are extremely nervous in their relations with Khmer. On the whole Cambodians treat the Vietnamese with caution. In private each will circulate horror stories of the other. When one sees two Vietnamese soldiers biking unarmed down a street in Phnom Penh, one pedalling, the other sitting sideways on the pillion, one sees men from a peasant army. Each wishes 'to return as soon as possible to his country, to his native village', Le Duc Tho said last December. Whether they wish it or not it is absolutely evident that they need to return as soon as possible, for Vietnam needs its sons. The meagreness of Vietnam's resources makes its achievement in Cambodia all the more remarkable and impressive.

THE VIETNAMESE who are in Cambodia are by no means a homogeneous group. There are the soldiers and their officers – certainly more than 200,000 stationed throughout the populated areas. They say they are engaged in a police operation. If so, it is a very large one. The prime aim of the Vietnamese army seems to be to provide reassurance that the present order is here to stay. At the same time, it is said, the Vietnamese themselves are not so permanent. Second, there are the advisers, observing, training and persuading their younger Cambodian counterparts; how far they are felt to be giving instructions still, it is impossible to judge. Third, there are the 'cowboys', lorry drivers in their Dodge trucks, working the roads. Some under contract to the Cambodian government, US-trained, they are the Vietnamese equivalent of the small private air companies in Thailand, saved from bankruptcy by the Cambodian bonanza. Finally, there are Vietnamese specialists, working in Phnom Penh from the hotel service to the hospital.

Have the Vietnamese been involved in looting and plunder? No one could speak for the cowboys. Aid personnel who have lived in the country for months, and who have developed working relationships with Cambodians, are adamant that stories of Vietnamese atrocities and pillage are manufactured in Thailand, or elsewhere. Rice supplies for Vietnamese troops come into Kompong Som on Vietnamese Army boats, and are unloaded by soldiers into army trucks, on a regular basis. I spoke to one Cambodian who wanted to join his family in Europe and evidently disliked foreign domination. Wearing a new digital watch, he claimed there was Vietnamese corruption. Where? 'In the countryside', he claimed, which seemed unlikely. Did he not then prefer Pol Pot? 'The Vietnamese do not genocide people' was his matter-of-fact response.

The factory machinery now in use in Phnom Penh is evidence that Vietnam's official policy is not how it has been painted in the West. The plastics factory, which Oxfam has put back into operation, is full of presses that mould useful consumer items for which there is a high demand in Vietnam. Its tool shop has Korean drills and lathes. In the canned-milk factory there is a good supply of tinplate, from the Lon Nol period. It would have been easy for the Vietnamese to have hoisted such valuables on to a lorry. They would have been immensely more precious than many tons of rice, because it is precisely in return for consumer goods that the Vietnamese peasants will deliver rice to the towns. By contrast, French officials in Hanoi confirmed that the new anis plant which was set up in Lang Son with French government aid, by an agreement in 1976, had all its machinery removed by the invading Chinese army, which then levelled the freshly built factory with dynamite.

FAR FROM ENTERING a colonial venture of profitable exploitation, the Vietnamese authorities, it seems, recognised that they would have to pay, economically and politically, when they ordered their troops into Cambodia. What is their strategic objective? In his December statement, Le Duc Tho simply said that three offers to negotiate were turned down while Pol Pot attacks continued, leaving Vietnam with 'no alternative' than to fight back. 'Our counter-attacks on the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary army were not simply an act of self-defence, but also a contribution to the liberation of the Kampuchean people from the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary genocidal regime, as desired by them.' Only then does he go on to discuss the Cambodian resistance, and concludes: 'Any honest and clear-sighted Kampuchean will approve of the aid given by our army to their people in their struggle for self-liberation.'

With this formula Hanoi formally recognises that liberation cannot simply be delivered to others, but that they must gain it for themselves. Nevertheless, the Vietnamese army has remained in Cambodia, and will do so until the threat from China ends, they say. Will the continued presence of the Vietnamese in Cambodia undermine their objective of creating an authentically friendly regime there? While a precipitate withdrawal would generate another human disaster, the more rapidly the Vietnamese pull out the more likely they are to leave behind a fraternal state. Chinese policy, therefore, is to pin down the Vietnamese: 'It is wise for China to force the Vietnamese to stay in Cambodia because that way they will suffer more and more', Deng Xiaoping told Japanese Premier Ohira last year,[1] revealing most exactly his feelings for the Cambodian people themselves.

[1]Cited in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 21 December 1979.

AT LEAST FOUR significant groups can be distinguished in the new Cambodian administration. There are the top government officials, the ministers, generals and political directors of the regime. There are the technical advisers, factory managers, and other officials left over from the Sihanouk and Lon Nol years who are not socialists, and are unlikely to become so. There are the relatively young administrators who are socialists, many of whom were students in the Lon Nol period, and are still in their twenties. These men, already in positions of considerable responsibility for their age, represent the backbone for any future left-wing regime. They were not formed in Vietnam – that generation is largely dead – but in the last year most have been there for crash-study courses. Finally, there are the new soldiers of the regime: the army, the local militia and the police.

The number of armed Cambodians attached to the Heng Samrin state seems surprisingly large. I was not able to get any figures from officials. But armed Khmer can be seen everywhere and on independent as well as joint patrols. The military effectiveness of a young, inexperienced and relatively casual force must leave a lot to be desired. They would not yet be an adequate answer to Pol Pot. Nonetheless, it must make a difference to the populace that Khmer are carrying arms. These are often ill-assorted. When we visited the mass grave by the broken television station in Phnom Penh, two Khmer girls wandered up with American M-16s over their shoulders. Vietnamese officials place much stress on the Khmer armed forces, their strength and speed of development. They seem to see this as the key to stabilising the country's new administration.

Heng Samrin is apparently a pleasant and sincere man, but he is evidently somewhat retiring and uncharismatic. Pen Sovan, the Vice-President, whose photo can be seen alongside Heng Samrin's, was an early defector from the Pol Pot movement, before it

Anthony Barnett

The plastics factory, back into action with aid from Oxfam.

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Anthony Barnett

Khmer militia on the road from Phnom Penh to the Vietnamese frontier.

seized power. He had joined the Vietminh in 1950, as a boy. The third-ranking member of the administration, Chea Sim, who heads the Ministry of the Interior, is a large man with an amiable style which exudes warmth and a rare sense of self-confidence. But his public role seems limited to silent appearances. No one in the leadership speaks well in public or has expressed the sentiments of recovery from the past in a way that evidently echoes the feeling of the people.

One of the aid officials said to me that he just couldn't understand why young Khmer did not say 'Thank you very much' to the Vietnamese for liberating them, welcome the opportunity to rebuild their country, roll up their sleeves and get to it. 'Why aren't they feeling happy at least about trying?' he asked.

There is definitely an unease as well as some incompetence among the Cambodian administrators; a mixture of fatalism and resignation afflicts some of the technical officials who speak Western languages. And this is rooted in the recent Cambodian experience. To see why, some understanding of Pol Pot is essential. For although he is now presented as a stooge of the Chinese, and there is no denying his having fallen into the arms of Chinese advisers, he was and remains a Khmer nationalist. Sihanouk was a vicious joke for many of the elite, and he ran his administration with considerable French aid (documents of the Sihanouk period, preserved in the national archives, were in French not Khmer). The Prince was followed by Lon Nol, who then 'invited' Saigon troops to help him and was protected by US bombing. Lon Nol was overthrown by what was finally an indigenous and independent Cambodian force – led by Pol Pot. In a major speech of September 1977, outlining the Party history, Pol Pot declared that his Cambodia was 100 per cent independent: politically, militarily, economically and even culturally. You can't get more 'independent' than that.

One Heng Samrin official made the reasonable estimate that perhaps one-ninth of the population would have said they supported him in 1978. These supporters, however, were Khmer, not Chinese, even if it was the latter who supplied the guns. The black-pyjamaed Brigade leaders and the executioners (who were poor peasants) were also Cambodians. This is not an easy fact to assimilate, when one is trying to re-establish a new national state, and assert its independence. It has to be something less than Pol Pot's.

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN EASIER to assimilate the *national* meaning of having thrown up such a monstrous regime, if it had been capably opposed from the beginning. Here is surely the most demoralising fact of all, especially for Cambodians. There was no anti-Pol Pot leadership of national stature during the Pol Pot years – no de Gaulle or Ho Chi Minh, who, by their resistance from abroad and by their appeal to their compatriots to take up arms, earned a legitimacy during their country's occupation that allowed them to lead it subsequently. There was opposition, of course, but it was private, however widespread. On the Left, the most outstanding and long-standing opponent of Pol Pot, and certainly a charismatic figure in his own right, Hou Yuon, was the first to be killed, in 1973 or 1975. Later, it seems from the evidence at Tuol Sleng, the main prison and torture centre for Pol Pot detainees, a network of resistance was established, which included famous Cambodian leftists like Hu Nim, Tiv Ol, Phouk Chhay. All were arrested, tortured, broken and killed. A section of the socialist resistance escaped to Vietnam, some even before 1975. But Hanoi's policy was to try to prevent an open breach with the Phnom Penh regime, and none on its soil was allowed openly to attack Pol Pot, until after the latter broke off relations with Vietnam at the end of 1977.

On the Right, none of Pol Pot's capitalist opponents died in the fight against him, unlike so many on the Left. Yet not one raised the flag of resistance unequivocally when there was a chance to do so. In a speech last December, Hun Sen, Cambodia's 29 year-old Foreign Minister, asked why the various rightists who rushed to the Thai border from France after the Vietnamese had overthrown Pol Pot had not gone there before. It is an apt question. By 1977 it was evident that Pol Pot's regime was unpopular and unstable, purging its cadres and becoming increasingly bellicose. Despite all the denunciations of 'human rights violations', no call to arms was made or allowed, by Khmer in Europe or America. In effect, Hun Sen charges that Washington knew – as it certainly did – of Pol Pot's hostility to Vietnam and wished to do nothing to deflect it; hence its refusal to fund a rightist opposition.

Nor can Sihanouk propose himself as a principled opponent of Pol Pot's rule. He returned to Cambodia, and palace arrest, knowing the situation, and he defended Pol Pot at the United Nations when he had his one great chance to strike out from an independent position, with the Vietnamese still keeping their options open in his respect. All parties might welcome the legitimacy Sihanouk would bestow, but none wishes to see him regain political power. And he seems to have forfeited his claim to such power by his equivocation with regard to Pol Pot.

JUST AS HISTORY cannot be rolled back to 1970, to undo the Lon Nol coup, so an historic opposition to Pol Pot by a national hero cannot now be created retrospectively. No such leader emerged and lived. This is a fact of grave psychological proportions for Cambodians in their struggle for self-liberation from their own past. It is little wonder that passivity and fatalism seem widespread. When the capital was liberated last year, a song was composed which I have heard draw a real response from the new establishment. Called after the city, it is a lament in traditional style. Roughly translated, its main refrain: 'Phnom Penh, Phnom Penh, for three years I have thought of you in sorrow, Phnom Penh.'

Khmer fatalism compounds the threat to the Vietnamese of Sino-American pressure along the Thai border. They are relied upon as the only security against a Pol Pot return, yet suspected of harbouring no desire to leave. How can a socialist state be created in such circumstances, even if it is only in the most elementary stage of economic development? Many fear the imposition of rigid social and economic controls. With liberalisation the order of the day in Vietnam this seems unlikely. But Pol Pot himself claimed to be socialist, which does not help the new regime at all. There is also a problem of 'style' – which I believe signals a crisis for Vietnamese communism. Getting into Cambodia today from the West is difficult, and will remain so until the regime is recognised. But once there, government officials are easier to see and more relaxed and helpful than they are in Hanoi, where bureaucracy and division of information baffles even old hands. Cambodia is a land of hammocks, of gossip transformed into hyperbole over late-night fires, of easy deals. The Vietnamese style of argued consensus, of public secrecy, of self-possession, is remarkably different. But what counts today is not so much the contrast in 'national character' as the difference in the specific experience and circumstances of the two national leaderships. The world which formed the senior members of the Vietnamese administration is not the world which has been experienced by the younger men now trying to run Cambodia.

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There is also a manifest difference of 'position' in the world between Phnom Penh and Hanoi. The former is much closer to the West. Daily flights touch down from Bangkok. Hanoi is quite out of touch, by comparison. There is the absolute difference in experience of revolution. The secrecy, the patience, the deviousness and the caution which Ho developed demonstrated an accurate appreciation of Vietnamese realities, and served well against the United States. The secrecy, obedience and control created by Pol Pot had quite other qualities.

ANY ATTEMPT TO IMPOSE a Hanoi style on Phnom Penh's new cadres would have little chance of working. Thus the Vietnamese themselves will have to change, or fail. There are signs that they might change. A year ago the official Hanoi line was that Vietnamese troops entered Cambodia only after a massive Heng Samrin-led uprising. In November, at the UN, this interpretation was followed by a plea that Vietnam acted in self-defence. In Le Duc Tho's December statement an historically realistic order of events is made. The importance of this shift is that it involves a certain abandonment of propaganda for frankness. And if there is to be a Cambodian 'self-liberation' then Cambodian socialists must be able to speak frankly to the Vietnamese in public – not least because the Vietnamese themselves have been implicated by the rise of Pol Pot. Their responsibility may be a fraction of that borne by the United States and China; nonetheless it exists. The point may seem to be one for historians, but in fact it could be critical for the development of relations between Vietnam and Cambodia today. Vietnamese officials will say that 'Pol Pot deceived us', but how was this possible? If the new leaders of Cambodia are eventually to stand before their people (and their own cadres) with self-assurance, they cannot project a version of the events which brought them to power, in which the role of Vietnam was entirely far-sighted and disinterested.

What future lies before Cambodia? In the short-run everything turns on getting the rice seeds in for the harvest at this year's end. In the longer run a nationalist explosion cannot be ruled out. But it seems unlikely that a popular insurgency will develop from the protracted warfare the Chinese are now fuelling by supporting Pol Pot in his Thai sanctuaries. Everyone seems to agree that the majority of Khmers prefer the presence of the Vietnamese with their *laissez-faire* policy, to Pol Pot's return and the threat of more terror.

The allegiance of the Cambodian army will be critical in determining the future state machine in Phnom Penh. A poor and oppressive dictatorship is one possibility, which will become a permanent burden upon its conqueror. As I left from Phnom Penh's Potchenchong airport, Husak's portrait was on display next to Heng Samrin's, in preparation for a state visit from the Czechs; an ominous symbol of such an eventuality. But if there is one rule about Cambodia that has yet to be broken, it is that all predictions made about its destiny are proved wrong. Perhaps it is fortunate, then, that no one has predicted the emergence of a relaxed and healed country, in the course of the next decade. This year, everything depends on getting the aid through and the rice planted. *(Phnom Penh, 10-20 February 1980.)*

Amrit Wilson

Ibrahim Ali's nine-year battle

IBRAHIM ALI is from Hamidpur, a remote village in Bangladesh. He is in his fifties and for nearly half his life has worked in the mills and factories of Manchester. Since 1972 he has been trying to bring his family into Britain. In the years in between one son has died and two others have passed the age when they qualify for entry into Britain. His wife and youngest son were given entry in 1977 but they had to return to look after the rest of the family. So Ibrahim Ali is still alone struggling (through the Immigration Appeals procedure) for his right to have his family with him in Britain.

There are so many Asian families broken by deportations and entry refusals, Ibrahim's case is unusual only in the details of its documentation, which reveal not only the racism of British High Commision officials in Bangladesh but their blatant colonial attitudes.

Ibrahim Ali's wife Marfush Bibi and their four sons applied for entry to Britain in early 1972. In the next two years they faced a shuttlecock of interviews (of the family in Dacca and Ibrahim in Manchester), an intrusive sifting of the personal details of their lives, and 'doubts' expressed by the Entry Certificate Officers (ECOs) as to the genuineness of their relationships. There were discrepancies apparently as to the exact ages of the children – were they born after Ibrahim's first visit home or second? During the visit or after? And what about Ibrahim's daughters (who have not and never had applied to come to Britain)? The High Commission officials wished to find out how old they were and when they got married. Were these questions relevant? The ECOs thought they were. If you come from a country where there are no birth certificates, and a rural culture where dates are not considered crucial, it is easy for British officials to accuse you of lying.

Finally, in September 1973, after seven interviews the ECOs admitted that the family were after all related as they said. But instead of issuing Entry Certificates they sent all the papers to the Home Office to be looked at again. There the file 'went astray' for nearly a year, and when it was found and Entry Certificates were about to be issued the ECOs intervened again – two denunciatory letters had been received about Ibrahim's application. These letters, which have never been seen, meant that the case was reopened. But this time the High Commission officials decided to undertake an epic journey into darkest Bangladesh – they would visit Hamidpur and discover the truth. ECO M. J. Shingler chronicled this journey in great detail.

They set off first in January 1977 but despite 'strenuous efforts' could not get through. In mid-February, two ECOs, a sahib and memsahib, decided to try again. They arranged to take two interpreters, a Landrover with driver, enough provisions for a week, and camping equipment. In Sylhet town they met some doctors who were going to a Health Centre on the way to Hamidpur, and they decided to accompany them because 'local farmers in the area could be hostile to people driving over newly ploughed paddy fields'. Even so the intrepid ECOs faced problems: 'It was very time-consuming forging a new track over the paddy because the paddy field walls were too high in places for a Landrover so we had to zig-zag round to find the best way'; also, some 'children threw half and quarter bricks at our Landrover'. In a village near Hamidpur, an amazing thing happened: some villagers (identified only as A, B and C etc.) approached them and told them without any prior conversation that Ibrahim Ali was a liar and was not related to the people who had applied to come to Britain. At Hamidpur itself this was angrily denied.

The ECOs seem to have spent no more than twenty minutes there and they were reluctant to question people because 'with the crowds involved in village Hamidpur it was essential that I tried to keep them at bay while Miss Byrde tried to keep ahead of the mass'.

The ECOs returned to Dacca and in March called the family back for interview. They told them that the two older boys, Bashir and Ashique, were not their sons and that Ashique was not a Muslim at all but came from a Hindu family who had promised to give Ibrahim land in return for taking their son to Britain. Proof of this, they said, was the fact that Ashique had not been circumcised. It was pointless Marfush Bibi pointing out that Ashique had not been circumcised because he had been suffering from acute eczema when the local circumcisor had come round to do the boys of the family. She was told that if she did not confess that Ashique and Bashir were not her sons, then the third, Ala, would be refused entry too. She answered that she did not care what Shingler said, as far as she was concerned they were all her sons.

Bashir, Ashique and Ala were then refused Entry Certificates. In the next few months Bashir died. His death certificate gives Ibrahim Ali as father.

Ashique and Ala's appeal came up before the Adjudicator in Manchester in December 1979. Sushma Lal from Manchester Law Centre, representing the boys, produced four witnesses from Hamidpur who testified in court that the boys were Ibrahim's sons (in contrast to the nameless villagers A, B and C). Receipts were shown for money Ibrahim had sent home in the names of his sons as far back as 1965, and it was pointed out that he had no motivation for bringing a Hindu boy to Britain because, being a Muslim, he could never use land in a Hindu village.

The Adjudicator did not answer these points. With a determination which matched the style and content of Shingler's report he dismissed the appeal. As for his own understanding of the intricacies of the case, he throughout referred to the youngest son as though he were a girl.

Ibrahim's only hope now is the Immigration Appeals Tribunal, where decisions of neo-sahibs such as Mr M. J. Shingler are judged by Home Office appointees, many of whom are ex-British Raj civil servants. It is a soul-destroying process for the immigrants but it is meant to be; for the Appeals system does not redress the injustices of the immigration laws so much as provide a 'proper channel' for turning anger into bitterness and resignation.

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CENTRAL AMERICA
Roger Plant

Washington's new package: repression & reform

Sacrifice of an archbishop

THE FACT that El Salvador's extreme Right had been threatening Archbishop Arnulfo Romero for some time does not prove that they were responsible for his assassination this week. But certainly he fitted their definition of a turbulent priest, for he had steadily withheld his blessing from any government which proposed to exclude the mass organisations of El Salvador's landless workers.

So long as Romero held his position, the Christian Democrats were deeply divided, and it may seem to the tacticians of the Right that with him out of the way the breach can be healed, and a coalition of some sort assembled. But the likelier truth is that it is too late, and that the smallest country in Latin America is set upon the path to civil war – a war which could be more ferocious than Nicaragua's, and which could embarrass Washington even more deeply.

Not long before his death, Archbishop Romero preached a sermon in Salvador, and appealed to President Carter and to all other heads of state to practise a policy of non-involvement. His words drew such a response from the congregation that he sent them as a letter to the White House – the 'Carta Carter' in Spanish political vernacular.

Just a few days before Romero was shot down, the Salvadorean 'People's Revolutionary Army' (ERP) alleged that uniformed US troops had participated in the massacre of more than 100 peasants last year. There will be legitimate scepticism about the ERP's claims, but less about the *Washington Post*'s disclosure that the Carter administration recently agreed a $7 million package of military aid for Salvador – concentrated on intelligence operations, and logistics. Since Romero's death, there can be no scepticism about the likely fate of those who object.

UNDER CONGRESSIONAL questioning four years ago, the State Department admitted that during the 1960s 'our military assistance and advisory programmes (in El Salvador) did have a counter-insurgency focus'. That 'focus' changed during the Seventies, when American policy became one of pressing for land reform – in a country where reform could hardly be more overdue. But it is now several years since that policy was repulsed by the uncompromising resistance of the landowners, and a reversion to earlier ideas would not be surprising.

Since communal land tenure was abolished in the last century, making room for enormous coffee estates, most of El Salvador's cultivable land has been in the hands of the '14 families'. After the Cuban revolution, and the abolition of the US sugar quota, the country's inhospitable Pacific area was opened up for sugar and cotton plantations – and, by 1975, landless labourers made up 40 per cent of the population (with another 34 per cent holding patches under one hectare, and therefore too small for subsistence).

In 1972 the army had to rig the elections to keep even the moderate Christian Democrats out of office. And in 1975 two small guerrilla organisations settled their ideological difference and merged as the 'Armed Forces of National Resistance' (FARN).

Five years ago, under American pressure, President General Molina made some attempt to respond with a programme of land reform. His government created an Institute for Agrarian Transformation, which aimed to replace the massive plantations with farms of a 35-hectare maximum. In search of political support against an intransigent oligarchy, Molina built up a moderate rural workers' organisation, the Union Communal Salvadorena (UCS), with large funds from the US Agency for International Development.

But when the first zone was earmarked for ownership changes – benefiting only 12,000 peasants at a cost of some $50,000 in compensation – the landowners made so much political outcry, and made such effective use of the political stresses inside the army, that the project was abandoned.

According to one progressive member of the '14 families', the US Embassy clashed strongly, but briefly, with the Molina government and then bowed to political reality as locally defined. In capitulating, then, the US lost any chance of defusing the situation.

MOLINA'S MILITARY successor, General Humberto Romero, came to power through fraudulent elections in 1977, and proved to be a landowners' man. He lost no time enacting a Law of Public Order, which was used to curb both peaceful and violent opposition. Parliamentary opposition parties, feeling cheated by the 1977 fraud, refused to contest subsequent congressional elections, and ceded authority to mass street organisations which displayed no interest in Parliament.

Groups like the Bloque Popular Revolucionario (BPR) and the Ligas-28 risked (and frequently lost) their adherents' lives during confrontations in the capital, San Salvador. In the countryside the moderates of the UCS, whose recruitment had been linked to Molina's forlorn promises of reform, lost ground to militant peasant groups. Atrocities, political killings and 'disappearances' followed (documented last year in a report from the Organisation of American States).

The Sandinista victory in Nicaragua last summer, leading to American fears of insurrection throughout Latin America, produced the fall of General Romero. In mid-October he was removed by a group of young officers whose first public acts were the disbanding of paramilitary forces and further promises of agrarian reform.

The rebel officers managed at first to bring a considerable spectrum of centre-left opinion into their coalition, though BPR and the Ligas remained outside. Both Ramon Mayorga from the Christian Democrats, and Guillermo Ungo from the social democratic MNR served in the first junta.

But by the end of 1979 both Ungo and Mayorga, together with most other civilian members, had resigned from the Cabinet. Ungo told me that the army and its US mentors still saw the main threat to El Salvador's society as coming from the mass organisations of the Left, and not from the rural oligarchy. The oligarchy was condemned in name alone, but BPR demonstrators continued to be killed.

A second coalition began to break up this month: another Christian Democrat resigned on 4 March with the admission that his party had lost all popular support. And Archbishop Romero made it clear that his moral authority would be deployed against any Christian Democrat who continued to lend legitimacy to the government.

Amid every sign of hopelessness, the junta made another attempt to avert popular insurrection by promising land reform. First reports of the new programme suggested that 60 per cent of El Salvador's land would be affected, and more than a million peasant farmers participate. Later reports were more circumscribed – but they were in any case accompanied by the declaration of a state of siege, imposition of a curfew and news censorship.

The government claimed that these measures were required to curb right-wing protest. But on 7 March the Salvadorean Human Rights Commission issued a press statement saying that the state of siege was a 'legal cover-up for a permanent situation which has led to more than 600 dead and 200 "disappeared" in the course of the present years'. It asked how the junta could 'talk of reforms benefiting the majority, and through a formal state of siege use cold-blooded assassination against those workers and peasants who supposedly benefit from the agrarian reform decree.' Next day, the Commission's offices were blown sky-high.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL has now added its voice to the protests. In a statement on 17 March, it called on the Salvador government to

> halt a campaign of murder and abduction against peasants, launched following an announcement of agrarian reform.

Amnesty said it had already expressed concern to the US government about reports of stepped-up aid

> to El Salvador's internal security forces, including military advisers, coinciding with the campaign of repression.

According to Amnesty, troops had been ordered to occupy plantations, had attacked villages supporting peasants' unions, and had handed over the secured plantations to members of the reconstituted paramilitary forces (formerly known as ORDEN, now re-named the Nationalist Democratic Front).

The BPR and Ligas leaders, while denying that they are a front for guerrilla organisations, make no secret of their Marxist alignments and no secret of their virulent anti-Americanism. El Salvador's own army is deeply divided between reformist and right-wing ultras – and would be hard-pressed to deal with a full-scale civil insurrection.

The murder of Archbishop Romero has no doubt removed an uncompromising critic, and made it theoretically possible to produce some political window-dressing for an essentially military regime. But the manner of Romero's death has created a martyr, and the more intelligent analysts in Washington must be aware that the long-term prognosis has worsened. Until recently, Central America was an unquestioned US sphere of influence, but if American hawks think they can tidy up El Salvador before it becomes an international issue they may be taking a great risk.

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London Diary

☐ It is almost a year since the Special Patrol Group ran riot in Southall. Strange to think that Blair Peach was battered to death 11 months ago and that the inquest has yet to take place. But not so strange that Peach's killers are still at large. The DPP and Scotland Yard have, till now, displayed a complacency which is perfectly comprehensible. They have nothing to fear from either Thatcher/Whitelaw or Callaghan/Healey. As a result we have not even been offered a scapegoat. And yet I can't help thinking that it must have been inter-departmental rivalry in the Yard that resulted in the *Sunday Times* front-page of 15 March, which named the guilty ones and cited evidence of obstruction on the part of senior police officers. What is clearly needed are the skills of a G. F. Newman to disentangle the truth from the intricate web of deception which has been spun by those who are supposed to defend 'law and order'. Equally reprehensible is the failure of the leaders of the union to which Blair Peach belonged (National Union of Teachers) to take the matter seriously. The first mean act of the NUT executive was to prevent their banner from being carried at the Peach funeral. They have compounded their error by failing to mention Peach's murder in 'The Report of the Executive', printed for their Easter conference in Blackpool this year. The 136-page report achieves new heights of boredom even for the NUT. It mentions every and any frivolity its authors could remember, but the murder of a former President of the East London Teachers' Association is totally ignored.

The brunt of the campaigning is being done by a tiny group of people known as the 'Friends of Blair Peach', who consist largely of teachers. They are planning a demonstration to Scotland Yard on 27 April, the day before the inquest is scheduled to re-open. One of the 'Friends', David Ransome, tells me that support is growing and that contingents are expected from the Jimmy Kelly and Liddle Towers committees in Liverpool and Newcastle. To these should be added a contingent of steel workers from South Yorkshire, who have recently experienced SPG activity outside the private steel plant of Hadfields in Sheffield. One of their leaders, Bernard Connolly, tells me that at least one coach will be making its way from the 'Socialist Republic of South Yorkshire'.

☐ I was somewhat surprised to receive an illiterate missive from a Major Hon. R. V. Pomeroy, who lives in Upton Noble, Shepton Mallet, Somerset. The Major informs me that 'we, the human race, are apes rather than ants' and since apes are a 'family type of animal', they prefer to 'live in loose colonies' and better still 'under their Queen'. I am then invited to join the newly-formed 'National Association for Services to the Realm' (Chairman: Lord Kingsale) and attend a meeting in Tony Benn's constituency in Bristol. The Association believes in compulsory national service 'in the face of constant threat from the East and as a back-up to Civil Defence Services in case of need'. This will be a substitute for social security payments and 'many of the existing corrective establishments'. I am about to dismiss this as one of Auberon Waugh's jokes, when I glimpse an enclosure which turns out to be a printed leaflet advertising the main speaker at the Bristol meeting. It is none other than the scourge of the unions, Mr John Gouriet, formerly of the National Association of Freedom. The workers and peasants of Somerset have been warned.

☐ The Council for Community Relations in Lambeth has made a submission to the 'working party on community/police relations' in the area. It makes depressing reading and suggests a pattern which is now familiar throughout the country. The characteristic form taken by the police in response to complaints from the black communities is to ignore them. The Lambeth cases are not dissimilar to what took place in Brick Lane in the East End for many years. An attack on shops and homes by racist gangs is followed by immediate phone-calls from the victims to the police for help. Many hours later the police arrive, display a bored disinterest and depart. The number of prosecutions resulting from complaints made by black people against physical attacks and vandalism is virtually non-existent. It takes a murder to stimulate a serious investigation. The Lambeth report cites an instance where an Asian woman provided the police with the name and address of one of the youths who had broken her shop windows several times and scrawled racist slogans on her walls. She informed the police that there were numerous witnesses prepared to give evidence. The guardians of 'law and order' stated that they were powerless. They advised the woman to hire a solicitor and take out a private summons. Lack of finances prevented such a course. The racist harassment continued and the woman was eventually forced to leave the area. This is not an exceptional case. It is part of a pattern. And I thought that the four Acts of Parliament which were passed in 1962, 1965, 1968 and 1971, making entry into this country increasingly difficult for blacks, were all designed to improve race relations in Britain. Possibly I am too impatient and the *coup de grace* against indigenous racism will finally be delivered by the Nationality Bill due to surface in Parliament later this year!

☐ The former Kampuchean ruler, Prince Sihanouk, was in London last week. Though the visit was private there was the inevitable summit with Lord Carrington. The Prince was in a genial mood and, according to my informant, appeared to be more concerned with music than the future of his country. In the good old days, of course, the Prince, apart from running the country, also managed to find time to write operas, direct films and compose numerous scores, which were than inflicted on the citizenry of Phnom Penh. It was good to hear that his musical talents have not been affected by the traumas inflicted on Kampuchea. He left behind a few, new musical pieces with Lord Carrington. One of them was entitled 'Reminiscences of Phnom Penh'. Hopefully this will soon be made available to a slightly wider public.

☐ Labour politicians become media heroes when they are in office, under attack from the Left or when they leave the Labour Party. Reg Prentice, Roy Jenkins, George Brown, Shirley Williams are all a case in point. They have now been joined by Roy Mason, the Labour MP for Barnsley, known to his friends as the 'little battler' and to his enemies as a 'wee Napoleon', both epithets, I hasten to add, being disgusting examples of sizeism. Now if there ever was a case of an MP totally out of touch with the views of the union that sponsors him, it is Roy Mason. When the union in question (the National Union of Miners) attempts to remedy this deficiency by taking a more active interest in the local Labour Party it is pilloried in the media. Robert Mackenzie blandly stated on *Panorama* last Monday that: 'It shows how easily ramshackle Labour Parties can be taken over by well-organised minorities' and went on to deliver the by now customary broadside against mandatory reselection of MPs. Barnsley is a mining town. The bulk of its electorate consists of miners and their families. How the NUM can be described as a minority escapes me. In any event when Mason is booted out and stands as an 'independent' he will have every opportunity to challenge the 'well-organised minority', though he would be better off if he followed Powell's example and sought a safe Loyalist constituency in Northern Ireland.

☐ Hugo Blanco, the Peruvian revolutionary and peasant leader, was speaking at a large rally in London last week. Blanco is the far-left's candidate for the forthcoming Presidential elections in Peru. Opinion polls show him second in the race with 18 per cent of the popular vote. Blanco belongs to an older generation of revolutionaries. His struggle in the early Sixties was lauded by Che Guevara; he was subsequently sentenced to death by the Peruvian military and reprieved only after an international campaign. Some years later he was deported and received asylum in Sweden. His recent trip to London was part of a tour of several Western European capitals to raise money for his election campaign. 'The multinationals take our wealth away', he told me, 'so I thought I would come and get some of it back.'

The most amusing anecdote, however, relates to his Swedish exile. Blanco has received extensive publicity in the Swedish press and was instantly recognised by many people. He was on a train travelling from Stockholm to Göteborg, when a man entered the compartment. He looked at the Peruvian and said: 'Ah, you are Hugo Blanco.' They had a long and friendly conversation about Latin America. At the conclusion of the journey, Blanco thought that he should do his Swedish comrades a favour and give them the name of this man as a 'possible contact'. It was Olof Palme, then Prime Minister of Sweden.

Tariq Ali

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ There was a very strong code of behaviour at Eton. I remember the first black boy arriving. There were very real fears as to how he would be accepted. But as every boy knew that it was not the done thing to be nasty to him, overnight he became the most popular boy in the school. Perhaps being a prince had something to do with it. – *TV Times* (E. O. Parrott)

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Open letter

From Peter Grimes

I would like to correct a couple of points made by John Arden in your issue of 14 March. Firstly, when he refers to the case of Frank Grimes I presume he means myself, Peter Grimes. I am an ex-British soldier who has served in Northern Ireland. Secondly, he is incorrect in stating that I was released on a judge's order because of my medical condition. In fact the judge merely adjourned the habeas corpus hearing for 48 hours, thus effectively washing his hands of me.

I was released by the police after two doctors had told them I was on the verge of a mental breakdown as a result of the intensive interrogation I had endured. This was my second period of detention under the PTA within three weeks. In all, I have been detained seven times under the PTA, these cat and mouse tactics obviously being a form of psychological warfare. I suppose, however, that I should count myself lucky compared with Brendan Gallagher, who has been arrested over one hundred times under the PTA without ever being charged with any offence. Other people have been released only to find that their employer/landlord/neighbours have been informed that they had been held under the PTA. As John Arden correctly says, this intimidation is aimed at silencing people whose views on Ireland the state dislikes. The silence of the British Left on Ireland calls into question the genuineness of their opposition to imperialism. It will be too late for them to protest when the PTA is used against them.

c/o BN. RCT, London WC1

Democratic lines

From Vladimir Derer

There are some inaccuracies in Patrick Wintour's piece (NS 7 March) on Labour Party affairs as well as points which require comment. He claims that the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (CLPD) 'once seemed to be wavering' on whether the decision to readopt the 'sitting' MP should be left to the CLP's General Committee (GC) or entrusted to 'primaries'. In fact the CLPD never 'wavered' on this issue. The overwhelming majority of CLPD supporters always realised that effective monitoring of the MP's performance can only be undertaken by the GC, that is, the body to which the MP regularly reports.

Patrick Wintour's comments seem to convey the impression that the CLPD is concerned solely with constitutional issues and is not interested in such important matters as, for example, the party finance. In fact the CLPD evidence specifically emphasises the close link between the relative political weight of CLPs and their capacity to perform other vital functions.

In particular it is unfortunate that the CLPD's alleged neglect of other than constitutional issues should have been bracketed together with the real neglect of these issues by the (misnamed) Campaign for Labour Victory (CLV). Unlike the CLPD, which strives to build up the party by giving more say to the rank and file, and thus to ensure that Labour Party policies are carried out when the party is in office, the CLV's proposed 'reforms' are designed to preserve the present PLP's monopoly in political decision-making and thus to perpetuate the conditions which have led to the party's decline.

Patrick Wintour's stricture on the CLPD for not saying anything on the subject of 'disproportionate strength of the union block vote' at conference is, of course, justified. This omission in the CLPD evidence, however, is not due to 'reasons of politics' as Patrick Wintour suggests, but simply because CLPD supporters were unable to agree among themselves on this admittedly important issue. Not a very satisfactory position perhaps from the point of view of the CLPD's effectiveness, but unfortunately one which an organisation run on democratic lines occasionally cannot avoid.

CLPD, 10 Park Drive, London NW11

Fixing up addiction figures

From Martin Short

David Clark (NS 29 February) quoted a Thames Report at the end of November in which I said 'There are thought to be tens of thousands of addicts, most of them in London'. This is true. However, I did not tell Clark I had 'got the figure from the *NOW!* article'. I do not take any statistics from *NOW!*. 'Tens of thousands', in any case, doesn't commit us to the 50,000 quoted in *NOW!*.

Far more important than Clark's distortions is his omission of the view currently held by senior officers in the Metropolitan Police Drug Squad that a reasonable estimate is around 16,000, which they arrive at by modestly quadrupling the Home Office's number of registered drug addicts. Of course, had Clark included this figure in his article it would have largely destroyed his argument that the law enforcement agencies (and their hack mouthpieces) are deliberately exaggerating the numbers in order to bring about the creation of a national drug agency.

Thames Television, 306-316 Euston Road, London NW1

Labour history

From John Baxendale

Before the issue in which Jack Dash's letter was published (NS 14 March) your 'History Workshop' articles contained only one reference to the Thompson-Althusser debate, and that was when Ken Worpole said it was irrelevant. It is therefore clear that Mr Dash, who presumes to inform us that the articles have been dominated by the Thompson-Althusser debate, has not read them.

More seriously, I am fed up with being told that only manual workers can write working-class history, because only they know 'what makes ordinary men and women tick'. I will reluctantly accept Jack Dash's implausible claim to understand his own motivations. But how can anyone have privileged access to the consciousness of people who lived and died centuries ago? Only if all working people are always and everywhere the same, and their experience identical with Jack Dash's, can his workerist position make sense. No academic Marxist historian I know of would presume to such arrogance.

Finally, I am by now used to the idea that anyone slagging academic Marxism, semiology or other intellectual esoterica has more or less free run of your pages. But I am getting tired of people telling me in a variety of unhelpful ways how they don't understand something. If you must adopt an anti-theoretical stance, could you at least enlist the services of people who understand what they are criticising, and can explain it to me before they demolish it? Gavin Kitching's excellent piece (*not* anti-theoretical) was a good, belated start at a serious consideration of the real problems about theory and its difficulty, which have always confronted socialists but are particularly acute today.

4 Kenbourne Grove, Sheffield S7 1WH

Action in Avon

From J. B. Simpson

It is a feature of war that each side feeds itself on its own propaganda, much of which bears little resemblance to truth. Fred Inglis should have known this when he attempted to report the NUT dispute with Avon (NS 14 March). His attempt is a ragbag of truths and falsehoods: truths on capitation and building maintenance and on the failure to replace a teacher librarian at Hartcliffe School; falsehoods on many specific points: (1) 400 teachers were not compulsorily redeployed. 140 were redeployed and in no case did the LEA use its power of compulsion. (2) The teaching force in Avon has been reduced by 331, not 400, since September. 3) Teachers leaving to have babies do have their right to return safeguarded. 4) Almost all appointments to schools between 28 June and 5 November were made on supply contracts. It is quite untrue that all first appointments are now on permanent supply. Most have since been absorbed to either permanent or fixed term contracts. 5) At Hartcliffe School the teachers did not dig in; 49 out of 125 refused to teach revised timetables. 6) It was not staff who tried to keep continuity for older children; it was the Head in issuing the new timetable. 7) The 49 teachers did not at any time close the school. 8) Their experiment in teaching exam classes in church halls was called off at half-term in the face of poor attendance by pupils and considerable disapproval by parents.

Fred Inglis could have reported that NUT tactics in Avon have caused three schools (of which Hartcliffe is one) to be pushed out for intensive action ahead of all the rest. He could have commented on the fact that the NUT is making up its members' pay in full, thus enabling them to strike (at any rate for a short period) at no material cost to themselves. And he could with profit have examined the question of how teachers can draw attention to injustices without doing further harm to the pupils, the schools, the neighbourhoods and the profession which they are seeking to serve.

Headteacher, Hartcliffe School, Bishport Avenue, Bristol BS13 0RL

Lukács defended

From Bruce Young

I was saddened to note that in his review of Löwy's recently-translated book on Lukács (NS 25 January) Terry Eagleton once more gave credence to certain myths about Lukács which the publication of Löwy's book might have been expected to help dispel, in spite of the limitations imposed upon it by its author's Trotskyist perspective. In particular, Terry Eagleton argued that Lukács's critique of Stalinism was conducted exclusively from a 'right wing' standpoint. But in fact, one of the main points made in what Terry Eagleton himself called Löwy's 'masterly summary' of Lukács's relationship to Stalinism was that after the mid-Sixties Lukács's critique of Stalinism moved decisively to the 'left'; thus, for example, in a series of interviews Lukács advocated the re-establishment of workers' councils as the basis for a new socialist democracy, explicitly rejected the idea of a possible 'self-reform' of the post-Stalin bureaucracies, and so on. True, this did not lead Lukács to ally himself with Trotskyism; but after all, surely not even Trotskyists can assume, without proof, that it is possible to reject Stalinism only from their own standpoint. The fact that Lukács, at least in his last years, did reject Stalinism, unequivocally and completely, but not from a Trotskyist standpoint, is one of the reasons why he was and remains an important and original figure in Marxism.

Centre for Curriculum Innovation, Wolverhampton Polytechnic, Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton

Members or membership?

From Harry Dorrell

Amrit Wilson (NS 29 February) concludes by 'wondering what the trade union movement is waiting for', before helping these 20 Asian women on strike. Remembering Grunwick and Garner Steak Houses and now the slow motion replay at Chix the answer is quite simply that the larger unions, my own among them, are just not interested in members, only in membership.

3 Oak Stubbs Lane, Dorney Reach, Maidenhead, Berks.

Information wanted

Soviet proletcult organisations: their influence in this country in the Twenties and Thirties. Details of groups, magazines, etc., especially *Storm* and *Proletcult Press.*

Andy Croft, Parker's Cottage, Church Lane, Redmile, Nottingham

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FIRST PERSON
Arthur Marshall

Taking notes

There are some jokes and comical occurrences that with me (and it must be an indication of something deeply unsatisfactory and feeble in my so-called intellect) simply increase, with every repetition, their power to please and among them I include the memorable visit paid by Lord Berners to his old private, or prep, school. He had been extremely unhappy there, as were all his fellow schoolboys, and as a result he had not been near the place since he left it, but he decided after many years to go back and have a look. There it all was, just as he had remembered it, with its buildings, extensive grounds and trees. However, as he strolled about he was at once struck by something strange that had certainly not been there in his day, namely an astonishingly happy atmosphere, with merry laughter to be heard and smiling faces to be seen on all sides. An air of jolly frivolity was everywhere, and he then discovered that the school was a school no longer and had now become a private lunatic asylum. Many would find the metamorphosis in no way an elaborate one.

Wishful to stir memories, many of them quaint, and chancing to be passing through the district, I too paid a visit recently to the original site of my prep school, Stirling Court on the Hampshire coast (it has long since moved and had indeed, during the war, to shift its ground for defence reasons to inland and more suitable premises). In my case, however, very few of the past splendours were still to be seen. The main components, four red brick houses connected by corridors, still stood although the linoleum-clad corridors themselves had vanished and the houses had returned to being private dwellings. Gone was the gymnasium and with it the terrifying ladder, hung at what was for us a dizzy height and parallel with the ceiling and along which we had to progress hanging from our hands, an athletic achievement for which I have so far found no use in life, though it is still there when needed. Gone was the odoriferous boot-hole where a dear old overalled smiler called Bob uncomplainingly cleaned our shoes, when not stoking boilers or scattering tea-leaves prior to sweeping dusty floors. Gone was the large and hideously corrugated-ironed Recreation Room, known to us as 'the rec' and in which we relaxed after lessons, tried to recover from lunch, wrote letters, acted plays, read and squabbled and fought and dodged bullies ('Buzz off, you rotter!'). Gone (or, rather, now incorporated in the house gardens) was the gritty playground which we shared with the headmaster's wife's troop of Buff Orpingtons, discreetly wire-netted in a shady corner and trying to mind their own business but at daily risk from footballs and cricket balls (and how very satisfactorily they squawked whenever one scored a bull's-eye). Gone. All gone.

And then suddenly, and miraculously still present and probably now used for housing gardening implements, I spied the shed in which we used to store our tuck-boxes, iron-bound wooden contraptions marked with one's initials and an absolutely indispensable part of pre-war boarding school life. They travelled from home to school by Luggage in Advance, a railway facility long since disappeared, I presume, accompanied by our large trunks, all of which were unfailingly delivered, no matter how remote the school, on the first day of term. The trunks, containing six pairs of almost everything and a Clothing List ticked off to prove it, were unpacked by Matron, gently perspiring in a giant cloud of tissue paper. We did the tuck-boxes.

As the term progressed and as the tuck-box emptied, which was pretty rapidly for the school food lacked that really solid and satisfying quality so seldom present in prep school kitchens of the period, while the Buff Orpingtons' globular contributions seemed largely to be eaten elsewhere (it was known as the Private Side), the box got filled up with other things – killing-bottles in which netted butterflies breathed their last and pathetically fluttered out their little lives, and empty shoe-boxes in which caterpillars did whatever it is that they were programmed to do and in a smelly confusion of dying vegetation, leaves, twigs and ordure. The people involved in such activities were known as bug-hunters, and Lord Berners (and here we happily go again) relates an alarming incident when the headmaster discovered that some of them, innocently shortening the word 'bug-hunter' and suppressing the 'hunt' part, were heard to be merrily referring to themselves as being keen you-know-whats. A dreadful pi-jaw followed.

It was, alas, at Stirling Court that I first became aware of the fact that adults, in addition to being either male or female, something that one had already grasped, divided up in another important way – those who possess tact and those who do not. On whatever grounds and for whatever virtues the Stirling Court masters were engaged ('Can offer handicrafts'. 'Prepared tackle "difficult" boys'. Said to be good mixer'. 'Some knowledge Hindustani'), tact was manifestly not one of them. At home I had become well aware of what constituted tact (my mother was an effortless practitioner) and its absence jarred. School instances abounded and I mention two of them, both of which seemed to me needlessly cruel.

Although by no means all of us were university-bound, we took for some reason an enormous interest in the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race which greatly cheered up the end of the Easter Term, the school being roughly divided between light and dark blue supporters. We gazed admiringly at the snaps of them visible in newspapers and endlessly discussed the crews' rival chances. On the great day and in those pre-wireless times, it was difficult to come by an early result (intolerable to wait until next day) but the village post-mistress obligingly got busy on her telephone and posted up the outcome in her window, the thrilling news being collected by the sports master and disseminated to us, eagerly waiting in 'the rec'. And on this sad occasion, in he came and loudly announced 'OXFORD'. There were deafening cheers from the dark blues, but then, to their horror, he added with a smirk the fatal words 'HAS LOST'. Consternation, and several boys in tears. It was, I suppose, meant as a joke ('Said to have witty personality'), but those horrified faces are with me still.

Another time, the mother of a boy called Parfitt and who lived locally announced a tea-party and bean-feast in her garden, an invitation extending, it was supposed, to the entire school, 64 strong. But then news came that, quite understandably, she could only, supplies of crockery, etc, being what they were, satisfactorily entertain about two dozen of us, the happy guests to be selected by Parfitt. It would have been possible, one imagines, to put up a list of those invited so that those unchosen could go away and blub in private. The method of selection favoured by the headmaster, however, was to line us all up and instruct Parfitt to walk up and down the rows, touching on the back those chosen. The suspense was appalling among sheep and goats as Parfitt went to and fro. Faces drained of colour and tears were not very far away. Could anything have been less tactfully handled? You'll want perhaps, and in your kind way, to know whether I was chosen. Yes, I was (I had been sucking up to Parfitt in an odious manner for days) but here again the gasps of disappointment still ring in my ears.

Never imagine that children don't notice and remember everything. Our old chum, the poet Burns, had a phrase for it. 'A chield's amang you taking notes.' And, as you see, not always very nice notes, either.

Roger Woddis

Talking Tough

'It would be tragic if the Thatcher Government fell a victim to Tory faint-hearts.' – Paul Johnson, in the Daily Telegraph.

If you can plunge in deep when other punters
  Are taking damn good care to hedge their bets,
If you can flay the party's Billy Bunters,
  And brand them all as wishy-washy wets;
If you can rant and not be tired by ranting,
  Or when it comes to cuts, don't deal in pence,
Or being breathless, don't give way to panting,
  And yet don't look too calm, nor talk much sense:

If you can wave your arms and get excited,
  Or play with words – nor baulk at talking touch,
If you can wish your fellows were united,
  But be too blind to see they've had enough;
If you can kill the crop and blame the seedman,
  If you can praise the blight and cry 'Well done!',
Yours is the Earth laid waste by Milton Friedman,
  And – which is more – you'll be a Lord, old son!

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Michael Mewshaw

Multiple Greeds

Doctor Fischer of Geneva or the Bomb Party
by GRAHAM GREENE *Bodley Head* £4.50

Earlier in his career Graham Greene made a distinction between his serious novels and his 'entertainments'. But gradually, as his reputation grew, raising with it the literary respectability of murder mysteries and novels of international intrigue, this distinction fell into disuse. Only an occasional, querulous reviewer insisted on asking whether *Travels with My Aunt* was a 'serious novel', or *The Honorary Consul* was an 'entertainment'.

Now, unfortunately, with *Doctor Fischer of Geneva or the Bomb Party*, Greene's publishers have reopened an irrelevant issue by labelling this tautly written novella a 'black entertainment', but dealing as it does with despair, loneliness, suicide, death, and the paradoxes of religious belief, *Doctor Fischer of Geneva* could also serve as a microcosm of the themes which have infused Greene's fiction for half a century.

Alfred Jones, the narrator, is a British widower who lost his left hand during the blitz. The same air attack killed his parents in their West Kensington house. Later, after his wife died in childbirth, 'taking with her the child whom doctors told me would have been a girl', Jones moved to Vevey, Switzerland, where he works for modest wages as a translator and letter-writer in a chocolate factory. While Switzerland is far from the grim Third World countries where many of Greene's characters play out their lives, it seems no less a spiritual dead end.

But then, long after he had assumed that his plastic, imitation hand and low income would prevent any woman from loving him, he meets Anna-Luise Fischer, who at the age of 20 is more than 30 years Jones's junior. To make their relationship all the more improbable, her father, Doctor Fischer, is a multi-millionaire famous – or infamous – for his dinner parties.

Perhaps seeking a father figure more sympathetic than Doctor Fischer, Anna-Luise falls in love with Jones, moves into his apartment, and agrees to marry him. When Jones worries what Doctor Fischer will think, she says he won't care; he has always been indifferent to her. Still, Jones decides he should declare his intentions to the man.

From their first meeting it is clear that Doctor Fischer is monstrously cruel – so cruel that his behaviour, while always appalling, is also mordantly amusing. It might be appropriate here to recall Nietzsche's comment about such humour: 'The joke is the epigraph of a feeling.' For as Jones learns, Doctor Fischer is capable of only a single emotion; he despises people and, with a maniacal will to power, he wants to find out whether there is any limit to human greed. His dinner parties are, then, little more than laboratory experiments during which he eviscerates his guests, stripping away all their pretentions to dignity.

Although he doesn't attend his daughter's wedding, he later invites Jones to dinner with five of his regular guests. 'The Toads', as Anna-Luise calls them, are all rich, yet driven by avarice for Doctor Fischer's expensive gifts, they quietly endure his savage insults. He mocks one man's physical deformity, taunts an alcoholic actor for his sexual incompetence, ridicules an elderly dowager's ugliness, accuses a military man of cowardice, then serves them all cold porridge while he eats caviare. Only Jones, with 'a poor man's pride', refuses to play the game. He says, 'You revolt me, Doctor Fischer.' To which his father-in-law replies, 'Yes, I can understand how you feel. I sometimes feel that way myself, but my research must go on to its end.'

As the Doctor admits, he, too, is avaricious. But his greed is of a different order; it is more like God's. Fischer doesn't so much want to create human beings as to debase them to the level of automatons or Pavlov's dogs. '... judging from the world[God] is supposed to have made, he can only be greedy for our humiliation ...' And so Doctor Fischer, claiming to be made in God's image, dedicates himself to humiliating others.

In Greene's novels the dogmatist, the moral absolutist, is always a dangerous man, sometimes a deadly one. Usually, he is like the Lieutenant in *The Power and the Glory* or Pyle in *The Quiet American*, someone blindly committed to a cause which brings pain to the people he wants to help. In contrast, Doctor Fischer has no intention of helping anybody, but he is still a moralist of sorts, an inverted one. Acting out of rage at man's weakness, expecting greed of everyone, he systematically creates conditions which are bound to expose people at their worst.

From Anna-Luise, Jones learns that Doctor Fischer's wife once betrayed him with a poor clerk who shared her liking for Mozart. What infuriated Fischer was not the sexual infidelity, but the realisation that she preferred the company of a failure. After destroying the man financially, Fischer harassed his wife until she gave up and died. Then he embarked on his quest to find the limits of his power and of people's greed.

When Anna-Luise dies suddenly in a skiing accident, Doctor Fischer doesn't bother coming to her funeral; he is too busy planning another party. Jones longs for death, but fails at suicide and goes to the Fischer mansion determined to make the doctor suffer as much as he has. But he discovers that no insult is adequate, no attack can break through the carapace of Doctor Fischer's obsession.

When Jones says he despises him, Fischer explains with infuriating patience that there is a difference between hating and despising:

> To despise comes out of a great disappointment. Most people are not capable of a great disappointment, and I doubt if you are. Their expectations are too low for that. When one despises, Jones, it's like a deep and incurable wound, the beginning of death. And one must revenge one's wound while there's still time.

So Doctor Fischer, greedy for revenge, arranges a last dinner party, inviting the usual guests, who are greedy for his money, and Jones, who is greedy for death. What follows is a somewhat stylised scene, an elaborate masque, set on a snow-covered lawn lit by fires. The exquisite meal, spiced by Doctor Fischer's insults, ends with two variations on Russian roulette, a preoccupation which runs throughout Greene's work and his biography.

Because of its brevity, there is at times something a bit schematic about *Doctor Fischer of Geneva* and, no doubt, many will read into it much that comes from a knowledge of Greene's previous books. But the novella stands well on its own. The characters, even minor ones, have a palpable reality and the prose often takes on the compression and evocative power of poetry:

> ... happiness is like one of those islands far out in the Pacific which has been reported by sailors when it emerges from the haze where no cartographer has ever marked it. The island disappears again for a generation, but no navigator can be quite certain that it only existed in the imagination of some long-dead look-out.

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István Mészáros

Ideology & Praxis

Philosophical Disputes in the Social Sciences edited by S. C. Brown *Harvester* £16.50
Praxis and Method by RICHARD KILMINSTER *Routledge* £10.95
The Concept of Ideology by JORGE LARRAIN *Hutchinson* £7.95 & £3.50

Witnessing the ever growing number of books dedicated to serious and on the whole strikingly positive discussions of ideology, it is hard to believe that not so long ago (roughly between the mid-Fifties and the mid-Seventies) the wishful projection of 'the end of ideology' attracted not only the ideologists of the 'advanced industrial state' but also many of their political opponents. Althusser and his followers, for example, championed the cause of 'science and theoretical practice' against the suspicious remnants of 'ideological concepts' which they set out to exorcise even from the vast majority of Marx's own works.

What enabled these political adversaries to assume virtually identical positions with respect to ideology were the positivistic affinities of their general theoretical frameworks. As Larrain rightly observes in his perceptive book on *The Concept of Ideology*:

> Neither Bachelard – Althusser's mentor – nor Althusser think it necessary to prove the value of science and only 'take cognisance' of it; yet this does not make them anti-positivist, nor does it prevent them from assuming the idealist premises which they want to avoid. On the contrary, one of the features of positivism is precisely its postulate that scientific knowledge is the paradigm of valid knowledge, a postulate that indeed is never proved nor intended to be proved. So what Bachelard and Althusser consciously propound, in the sense that scientific truth imposes itself by itself, is precisely and nothing less than the *a priori* of positivism.

If we now add to this great revival of interest in ideology the astonishing revival of Hegel's fortunes in the last few years, following a long period of varied positivistic attacks on his 'holism' and 'essentialism', clearly we are confronted with a significant change in the philosophical climate. The point is not that now philosophers and their readers are inescapably destined to realise the 'unity of theory and practice', of philosophy and reality, but that they cannot help at least 'taking cognisance' of the existence of the latter, at a time when even the Royal Institute of Philosophy in its great Hall treats large audiences to sympathetic weekly lectures on the 'metaphysical subject' of *Marx and Marxism.*

Kilminster's book on *Praxis and Method* surveys a philosophical tradition which is intensely concerned not only with the nature of ideology and the relationship between philosophy and science but also with the problems of social transformation and the effectiveness or otherwise of theory's intervention and impact on changing society. The subtitle of this ambitious and in several contexts perceptive doctoral thesis is: *A Sociological Dialogue with Lukács, Gramsci and the Early Frankfurt School* – attempting, in the sense of Adorno's words, 'to seek the new in the old' in order to find answers to present-day problems.

In the course of this somewhat rambling 'dialogue', often overburdened also by the sidetracking interjections of the Doctoral Discourse, the author touches on many important issues, even though he tends to drop them and jump on to something else precisely at points where we are most anxious to hear more. We are presented with a succession of passionately held critical views, starting with a defence of Hegel against Marx and ending with a dissection of some of the main tenets of 'emancipatory critical theory'.

Positive answers and solutions are frequently promised but they remain rather elusive throughout the work. This is not a *consequence* of the restless method of abandoning the discussed problems at the 'moment of truth' in favour of new ones pursued and discarded in the same fashion. The opposite is the case: it is the vagueness and inconclusiveness of the implicit solutions that determines what Kilminster calls the 'dialogic character through which the argument passes backwards and forwards across stages of history'.

In opposition to the surveyed tradition Kilminster insists that:

> What remains historically to be accomplished is to consummate the process of enlightenment or scientification at the present stage because the influential post-Lukácsian Marxists had to greater or lesser extents fallen back to an earlier phase of this process.

Which is vague enough. But we get even vaguer specifications of what would constitute the promised 'higher standpoint'. We are told that 'the routinisation of charisma must be fought by charismatising routine if it jells into reification.' (If Lukács, Marcuse and the others only knew that!) And after advocating a '*perennial* justification for social theory' in virtue of a claimed '*effectively eternal*' in human history, Kilminster's ultimate answer is an invitation 'to undertake genetic, empirical investigations of long-term social processes which may provide answers to the kind of questions posed above'. Perhaps so, thus, by all means, let the play begin. At the same time, it seems to be rather sanguine and premature to hail the mere promise or hope of the far from certain fruits of a one-sided theoretical project as the 'transcendence and incorporation into a higher standpoint' of the criticised tradition. For the latter, with whatever limitations, always defined and justified its own theoretical perspectives in terms of and in response to the acute dilemmas and question marks of the prevailing *social practice.* Thus Kilminster, despite his original intentions, paradoxically ends up with a *theoretical reductionism*, assuming a position which his partners in dialogue had in fact 'transcended and incorporated into a higher standpoint' a long long time ago.

What made Lukács's *History and Class Consciousness* and the orientation of the Frankfurt School problematical was not the neglect of empirical investigations or an excessive concern with the philosophy of praxis but the fact of being condemned to operate on the periphery of truly effective social practice. The irony, indeed tragedy of their predicament was that they produced their ideologies of 'emancipatory social praxis' in a historical period of devastating social paralysis – in the aftermath of the defeat of the European revolutions, followed not only by Stalinisation in Russia but also by the triumph of Fascism and semi-Fascism, from Hungary and Italy to Germany and Spain and other countries. They were condemned to look, in a desperately utopian fashion, for a substitute agency that would realise their vision of socialism in the absence of a viable mass movement.

Thus Critical Theory – seeing the social world more and more as the triumph of 'organised capitalism' under which the working class remains irrevocably 'integrated' – became the ideology of frustrated and paralysed praxis, insisting on the abstract imperative of 'radical negations' (Marcuse) and on approaching even the problems of method in the spirit of a 'negative dialectic' (Adorno). The fact that the dynamic of global social transformations, with all the massively explosive contradictions involved, did not simply disappear under the integrating weight of the forces of domination but temporarily shifted to the areas of acute dependency (euphemistically called 'the developing countries'), remained to the end hidden from its horizon. No wonder, therefore, that the disappointment of expectations on behalf of its utopian substitute agencies ('outcasts' and students) produced darker and darker clouds, culminating in utter pessimism.

Marcuse's moving swansong – *The Aesthetic Dimension* (more explicit original title: *Die Permanenz der Kunst)* – makes this clear with gripping intensity: 'In reality *evil triumphs*, there are only *islands of good* to which one can *escape* only for *short periods* of time'. Thus there remains only the 'hope in despair'. The artist (or writer) – finds himself 'under obligation to take his stand *against the people*' (because of the people's 'integration') and thus (justifiably) to function as an *élite*, since 'the concept of the elite has a *radical meaning* today'. The intellectual's mission is 'giving meaning to death' and keeping alive a 'fight against the impossible'.

Now that with Marcuse's departure all the great men of Critical Theory are gone, younger representatives of the Frankfurt school – from Jürgen Habermas to Karl-Otto Apel – seem to be poised to make their peace with 'instrumental reason'. Apel prominently figures in the volume on *Philosophical Disputes in the Social Sciences*, the outcome of a symposium of the Royal Institute of Philosophy at the University of East Anglia. This volume offers an impressive overview of the latest positions of Critical Theory as well as what it calls 'Alternatives to relativism', together with an admirably clear and concise discussion of the 'Relativity of Power' by Steven Lukes.

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Apel's position is summed up in the assertion that 'critical social science is the very counterpart of quasi-nomological behavioural science, – a counterpart that might also fulfil a compensatory function with respect to the danger of technocracy based on manipulative conditioning of behaviour.' Unlike in Marcuse, there is no more overpowering evil, only a modest 'danger' of manipulative conditioning – a mere possibility – to which Apel contrasts the countervailing possibility of 'critical-emancipatory self-reflection'.

One of the principal themes of Apel's contribution is the advocacy and assertion of the 'coming to consensus' that brings with it the realisation of 'the ideal of an indefinite communication-community' by means of a 'rationally argumentative discourse'. His self-reassuring conclusion is that our problems are 'by no means inaccessible to rational arguments', which is, again, well within the bounds of possibility. Put in this way, who could argue any longer, short of taking upon oneself the odium of irrationality? Thus we have achieved consensus in our ideal communication-community. But in doing so, haven't we slightly begged the question by assuming rationality in order to predicate the triumph of rationality, disregarding all those dramatic contradictions which continued to anguish the older generation of critical theorists to their last moment?

Apel's reflections were written in 1977, exactly when Marcuse published in German his *Aesthetic Dimension*. Side by side their contrasting pieces read as if Marcuse had died centuries ago.

Brian Harrison

Counter-Culture

Association Football and English Society 1863-1915 by TONY MASON *Harvester* £15.95

'We are in danger of producing a race of workers who can only obey their masters and think football', the *Labour Leader* complained in 1904: 'this is the material out of which slaves are made.' The British Left has always been a bit embarrassed by mass spectator sport – with good reason, for it challenges progressive values at many points. Victorian Liberals disliked its crowd mentality, its traditionalism and its indifference to political and educational improvement. And Edwardian socialists could object to its fragmentation of the working class into vigorously competing teams. Furthermore, while providing recreation of a classless type, football's transfer-fees and knock-out competitions seem to enshrine competitive values as completely as its football pools consolidate a distribution of wealth even more random than the rewards of capitalist commerce and manufacture.

Football matches and race-meetings are a powerful counter attraction to political activism. Nearly half the British population watched the World Cup television broadcast on 25 June 1978; telephone calls and the national demand for power declined markedly while the match was on, except during the interval. What political event could produce such interest? Not a general election, if the 1970 campaign is any guide, for of those questioned, 45% (most of them Labour supporters) said they were more interested in the World Cup; only 35% said they were more interested in the election.

It is curious that the growth of Association Football has never attracted a scholarly historian, for it arrived rather suddenly on the scene about a century ago. In 1867 the Football Association had only ten affiliated clubs, and it was not till 1884 that attendance at the Cup Final exceeded 10,000. Mason shows how the game emerged in its modern form in the 1860s and 1870s under amateur middle-class and public school leadership. It was taken over during the 1880s by working-class professional players and mass audiences in the Midlands and North of England, with Blackburn Rovers and Preston North End playing a particularly prominent part in the story. But the middle classes still retained much of the responsibility for finance and management, and in 1914, when George V appeared at the Cup Final for the first time, the game could at last be said to have arrived.

Tony Mason has done us all a great service by treating football's history seriously. Like all historians of leisure, he faced immense difficulties, especially with sources; a society which placed a high premium on work just did not regard information on recreation as worth collecting. For example, Mason cannot get systematic information on who watched the matches until a stadium collapsed at Ibrox Park in 1902; only this can give him a list of casualties whose occupations can be analysed. Furthermore, anyone who wants to treat the subject seriously gets very little help from the football clubs; Whitehall is by no means alone among British institutions in its hostility to 'open government'. Mason tells us in his introduction that of the 33 clubs he approached, 18 claimed to have no records, seven had records but refused access to them, four were prepared to reveal only a small amount of material, two had interesting collections which they made available, and two clubs did not even have the courtesy to reply.

Mason has triumphed over all these difficulties. He asks all the right questions: that is, the questions a sociologist would ask. But he answers them with much less pretentiousness, and without making quantitative information carry more than it can bear. He is always alive to the importance of figures, but he simultaneously warns the reader against making too much of them. Using a wide range of sources, with excellent documentation, he explains his preoccupations clearly, and provides maps, tables and graphs whenever they are needed.

Where do we go from here? Mason's nicely-presented book needs to be complemented by studies of the clubs at the local and regional level, if possible in connexion with the history of other sports. And the analysis needs to be carried forward beyond 1915. Given that Mason has been able to make such good use of information culled entirely from public sources, especially local newspapers, this would not be impossible, especially as former players could be interviewed. But the end-product would be so very much better if the clubs would emerge from their self-imposed purdah and acknowledge their importance by collaborating fully in the scholarly writing of their own history.

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Henry Roseveare

Court & Country

The City and the Court, 1603-1643 by ROBERT ASHTON *Cambridge* £10.50
King Charles II by ANTONIA FRASER *Weidenfeld* £8.95
The Image of the King: Charles I and Charles II by RICHARD OLLARD *Hodder* £7.95
Arts and Society in England under William and Mary by MARY EDE *Stainer & Bell* £9.50

Historians of Stuart England have been a little slower than their 18th-century colleagues to re-discover the utility of those traditional labels 'Court' and 'Country', but once seized on, more than a decade ago, they have served in one book after another to define the social and political antagonisms of that century of conflict. Transcending 'Parliamentarian and Royalist' or 'Whig and Tory', 'Court and Country' have served once again to identify not merely political parties, let alone geographical locations, but profoundly opposed social and political ethics – the metropolitan 'Court': idle, time-serving, crypto-papist and corrupt; the provincial 'Country': honest, industrious, independent and devout. They are capable of more sophisticated and less one-sided definition than this, but it is hardly surprising that there have recently been signs of discontent with the crude dichotomy they imply. 'Court and Country', we are now reminded, were interdependent; their interests overlapped; antagonism was not their natural posture. Above all, it is argued, the Civil War did not derive, inevitably, from the long-term opposition of their social and economic interests. If the key to that war is to be found, it lies in the intricate contingencies of 1640-1642.

Something of all this re-emerges from Robert Ashton's *The City and the Court, 1603-1643*. He too is at pains to contest an over-simple explanation of London's parliamentarianism in the Civil War. He too finds the key to its final allegiance in the events of 1640-1642, and he too stresses the interdependence which normally bound business concessionnaires and City fathers to Crown and Court. But where he takes issue with the current orthodoxy, established (he claims) by Valerie Pearl in 1961, is in re-stating the long history of disaffection which, from the accession of James I onwards, soured the relationship of City and Court and ensured that there were enough reserves of resentment around for the radicals to capture the City's common council in December 1641. Unlike Professor Pearl, he believes the majority of City Fathers

to have been far from natural supporters of Stuart absolutism and that what really requires explanation is why the bulk of aldermen eventually became royalists in 1642.

In posing this question Professor Ashton is in accord with other recent historians of the 'Country' who see the crucial enigma of 1642 in the emergence of the royalist, rather than the parliamentarian, party. Unfortunately he attempts only a perfunctory answer, and the main weight of the book is thrown into a review of the City's politics in the 1620s and 1630s. That in itself is instructive enough, and in exploring the rivalries and resentments of revenue farmers, livery companies, monopolists and company directorates he usefully extends our knowledge of national politics too.

There is little of politics to disturb Antonia Fraser's readers. Absorbed in the Court, we are kept – with Charles – remarkably well-insulated from the issues outside. Of course, unpleasant things intrude. We are driven into exile, father loses his head, we endure extremes of poverty and have to put up with the unspeakable Scots. Quite why it is all happening is never made clear, but when it is over and Englishmen come to their senses again it seems only right and proper that in 1660 'the cry was all: 'A King, a King''.

But the fact is, the cry in 1660 was also 'A free Parliament! a free Parliament!', and no account of Charles II's restoration will satisfy unless it explains how significant that was. 'A restoration,' wrote Charles James Fox, 'is the most dangerous and worst of all revolutions', and the trouble with this, as with most accounts of Charles, is that it fails to convey that the Restoration was something more than just a limp surrender to the old ways of doing things. The extraordinary fertility of political, administrative and economic changes which, by the end of his reign, had made Charles's government more powerful than that of any of his predecessors, is left unexplained.

Yet in other respects Antonia Fraser succeeds rather well. She is an immensely conscientious biographer, reading all the printed sources, visiting all the significant sites, patiently following her hero through all the phases of his career. This has its risks. Sir Arthur Bryant's indulgent but brilliantly successful sketch of Charles depended, as

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sketches must, on elegant selectivity, but in Antonia Fraser's more painstaking approach one discerns a determination to be scrupulously fair, and for her this means confronting every bit of evidence about Charles whether favourable or not. She deals objectively with Charles in exile – a moody shoe-fetishist, picking over the charitable scraps thrown him by France or Spain. As for his religion, she crisply and correctly points out that the only two things we can state with certainty are that he was born an Anglican and died a Roman Catholic. His extravagance, laziness, deceitfulness and promiscuity are dispassionately dealt with in turn.

Perhaps the only point at which the strain to be impartial begins to tell is when we reach the Secret Treaty of Dover of 1670. Modern scholarship has now removed the central prop of Bryant's case: Charles was *not* forced into a sordid bargain with France by inadequate parliamentary supplies, and if the French subsidy was comparatively trifling there remains the catholicity clause – Charles's promise to declare himself a Roman Catholic at some future date with French military support. Fraser speaks sharply here of Charles's 'more prejudiced critics', but one does not have to be a puritan or a Whig to find this foolish episode as dangerous as it was discreditable, and even if the treaty said nothing of England's conversion, the papers of the King's principal adviser, Clifford, evidently did.

Yet Antonia Fraser gives fair warning that this biography is a labour of love and the result is unquestionably sympathetic. It is also substantial, and if the book sometimes feels long it offers many rewards. The author's fascination with her subject conveys itself and suggests that she has experienced the truth of Halifax's aphorism, that 'the struggling for knowledge hath a pleasure in it, like that of wrestling with a fine woman'.

Halifax, Charles II's most penetrating contemporary critic, also had other shrewd things to say, and one has often felt that the greatest deterrent to writing a biography of Charles must be the sheer impossibility of improving on his perceptions. Richard Ollard has solved this problem quite brilliantly by building his study round Halifax, with Clarendon and Bishop Burnet thrown in for good measure. This trio – the Trimmer, the proto-Tory and the unquestioned Whig – should form a balanced, if not wholly impartial, jury and their verdict is unequivocal. Evidently it is one which Mr Ollard shares. Charles's life, he concludes, 'proves him lazy, self-indulgent, shallow, frivolous and shabby'. In truth, Ollard is less concerned with the image of the King than the character of the man, but for Charles I he reverses his priorities, and the slippery little prig revealed in H. G. Pot's family group (reproduced only in Fraser, oddly enough) is predictably eclipsed by the specious splendours of Van Dyke. This is the only disappointment in a cleverly conceived and elegantly executed double-portrait, written with great distinction. Inspired by the Tate's splendid 'Age of Charles I' exhibition in 1972, Mr Ollard has sought to match the iconography of the two Stuarts with the literary portraiture of subsequent centuries. 'The Queen does not care for Charles II', said Queen Victoria, faced with his coronation picture (thus disposing of our favourite myth that it was he of all her predecessors she would most have liked to dine with), and as Ollard shows, there was little in the 19th-century, let alone 18th-century historiography of the Stuarts to encourage her to change her mind. Perhaps it is their 20th-century image which now requires re-assessment.

Images of a different and sometimes more homely kind are Mary Ede's concern. There are portraits, certainly, and palaces, anthems and plays: the Court still dominates the 1690s. But there are also posset-cups, love-spoons, trade-cards and shop-signs – significant vestiges of the commercial prosperity which had come to provincial England. Urban society, outside London, was still modest but centres like Norwich, York and the spas of the west were beginning to sustain a cultural life of their own. Norwich had its winter theatrical season and probably the first provincial newspaper. London fashions may have quickly filtered into the watering-places of the south, but elsewhere vernacular traditions of craftsmanship still flourished – in tombstones, gable-ends, earthenware and plaster-work. The more showy monuments of the age are necessarily those of the Court, but a Court which had now been assimilated with a greatly enlarged governing-class. If the commercial revolution of the 1670s had created great wealth, the fiscal revolution of the 1690s had re-distributed it, and the political heirs of the constitutional revolution now enjoyed unparalleled prosperity. Few of the monuments of private patronage in the 1690s can be divorced from the profits of public office, and in illustrating this thesis Dr Ede ranges across all the major arts in a concise but never superficial survey, handsomely produced.

John Arden

Impressing the Crew

Official Discourse by FRANK BURTON & PAT CARLEN *Routledge* £7.50
Literary Language from Chaucer to Johnson by A. J. GILBERT *Macmillan* £12
Beyond the Letter: A Philosophical Inquiry into Ambiguity, Vagueness and Metaphor in Language by ISRAEL SCHEFFLER *Routledge* £8.50
Current Literary Terms: A Concise Dictionary by A. F. SCOTT *Papermac* £3.25

In R. L. Stevenson's sinister story, *The Ebb-Tide*, a demoralised beachcomber finds himself masquerading – for disreputable reasons – as the mate of a schooner with an unsuspecting Polynesian crew. The captain is a party to the deceit.

> It was with a singular sensation that Herrick prepared for the first time to address a crew. He thanked his stars indeed that they were natives. But even natives, he reflected, might be critics too quick for such a novice as himself: they might perceive some lapse from that precise and cut-and-dry English which prevails on board a ship; it was even possible they understood no other; and he racked his brain, and overhauled his reminiscences of sea romance for some appropriate words. 'Here, men! Tumble aft!' he said. 'Lively now! All hands aft!' . . . (The captain orders): 'We'll up anchor, if you please'. 'For heaven's sake, tell me some of the words', whispered Herrick. . . .

Surely this, or something like it, is the dilemma at root of the controversy sprung off by Kevin Brownlow's most welcome article (NS 25 January) about jargon among the film-students? There is somewhere a distinction, and a very ticklish distinction indeed, to be drawn between the use of essential technical language, 'precise and cut-and-dry' (though obscure to outsiders), among practitioners of any art, craft, or profession; and the debasement of that language for the purpose of mystification. Herrick, in *The Ebb-Tide*, is indulging in mystification at more than one level. He is attempting to persuade sailors that he is himself a ship's officer: and he is also attempting, with the captain's connivance, to mislead the colonial government of Tahiti (the captain will not be able to sail if he cannot present a qualified mate, and the police are on both of their tracks).

The more complex our craft-mysteries have become in recent generations, the more adept one needs to be to learn the 'appropriate words'. There is one main difference between our situation and that of *The Ebb-Tide*. It lies in the point of origin of these 'appropriate words'. Tumble aft, all hands aft!' would only have been seriously spoken by seamen to

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seamen to facilitate actual voyaging. But the jargon objected to by Mr Brownlow is in general used solely by self-appointed leaders of the films' audiences. And this does not apply only to films.

In other words, there is a whole new craft-mystery vocabulary that has arisen not in pursuance of any particular skill, but in order to explain, analyse – and often to condemn – from the outside, and most frequently from the colleges and universities, where the skills in question are rarely so adequately taught as to secure the graduate's immediate competence at the bench of a practical workshop. Instead of sending forth a steady outflow of qualified apprentices into the real world of production, with all its compromises, expediences, crudities and – finally – achievements, the academy is breeding a caste of commentating brahmans or druids, able to communicate only among themselves, unwilling to open their ranks to those who – whatever their craft-capabilities – cannot get their tongues round the syllables of *Shibboleth*, and by implication, declaring to the general public that it is forever excluded from the congregation of the elect.

In Stevenson's story the police are not so close behind the schooner that they can overhear Herrick's blundering efforts with the nautical phraseology (significantly learnt from 'romances', from the *outside* indeed, though not a very serious outside): he aims to impress nobody but the crew. Today, however, the presumptuous logorrhea is being poured all the time over the rail toward the shore, and only the 'police' (i.e. the lay-population at large) are expected to pay attention – the real sailors can go hang.

There is a classic example in *Official Discourse*, quoted with apparent endorsement from a sociological druid called Colin McCabe:

> To understand a film like *American Graffiti*, its reality and its pleasure, *it is necessary* [my italics, J. A.] to consider the logic of that contradiction which produces a position for the viewer but denies that production.

This is evident nonsense. Were it true, nobody but Ph.D.s could have got anything out of the film at all: yet I understand that *American Graffiti* did pretty well at the box-office. Though I've no doubt most of the audiences would have been incapable of understanding the reality and pleasure of McCabe: and small blame to them. But *Official Discourse* is altogether a weird book. It attempts two incompatible tasks at the same time (and splits asunder in the process): one – to demonstrate the inherent fakery of governmental commissions of inquiry (the Scarman Report on N. Ireland, the James Report on the brick-planting detective Challenor, etc.) through analysis of their linguistic assumptions, and, two – to create from this analysis some sharp reinforcement of the authors' druidical status. The result is that the latter is likely to be tainted by suspicions of leftist political dogmatism, while the former exposes the undoubted slipperiness of our masters only to druidical initiates, for whose bad opinion Thatcher and Whitelaw could not give a damn. There is deep contempt implied here for the electorate: and when was there ever a political structure brought down by the likes of this:

> How useful are the epistemological categories of the science/ideology dichotomy to attempts to characterise the knowledges produced by opaque and overdetermined social practices?

Dr Gilbert tries something a little less esoteric. He has written a book about a large number of – on the whole – clear and vivid writers, with the apparent intention of making them even clearer to readers who find 14th-18th-century language difficult. He does this by re-examining the traditional concept of linguistic 'decorum', by which an author selects, *mirabile dictu*, the style most appropriate for his/her theme, and sometimes mischievously chooses the ostensibly inappropriate one for a special effect. It is not a hard matter to elucidate, and Robert Graves and Alan Hodge produced the hitherto definitive work on it some 40 years ago (*The Reader Over Your Shoulder*: of contemporary as much as historical application). I cannot see that this new book has anything useful to add, and its own style is sadly clotted, e.g. on Spring-Heeled Jack Skelton, of all people!

> The additive syntax of the plain style is amplified by parallelism and repetition; the occasional alliterative phrase reminds us of Skelton's exploitation of common proverbs. . . .

This isn't jargon: but oh dear, so predictable, so dull. Not a jolt to the imagination in the whole volume.

For Professor Scheffler however, I have nothing but grovelling respect. Here is the true druid's *pons asinorum*: and I confess myself scarce qualified to cross it, although I am some sort of practitioner in the ambiguities and contradictions of language. We are not dealing here with mystification, except in the legitimate sense that mediaeval masons invented handshakes and rigmaroles to protect the integrity of their building-sites from vagrant impostors. By page 13 he has moved into a form of algebra to express himself: by page 63 into something very like geometry. I cannot assess his book by the standards it demands: that must be done in the learned journals. But anyone at all concerned about words, and about the extreme complexity of having to explain the use of words primarily through words themselves, ought at least to be aware of it, and of the kind of monumental clarity that must lie behind the most quick-set verbal thicket, if the human race is to remain even a little bit sane in its discourse.

The playwright Albee said the other night on TV that man is the only animal to use metaphor, which implies art, which implies that if we allow art to be subsumed beneath politics, sociology, economics, or any other preoccupation, we do violence to our distinctive identity. Metaphor is a figure of speech: used well it is part of our growth, used badly it dissolves us. A dictionary of literary terms is therefore an absolute need in a literate society.

Alas, A. F. Scott's is not quite what it proclaims itself. 'Current'? It does purport to have been revised since its first printing in 1965. But even so. 'Epic' in the Brechtian, or even the Hollywood sense, is not included; neither is 'Alienation Effect'; 'Ballad' in its Tin Pan Alley meaning is ignored; 'Agitprop' is not there, although 'Angry Young Man' and 'Andy Capp' do testify to some desire by the compiler to keep up with some of the trends. I did manage to find out from it what a 'Palinode' was, and also 'Metathesis'. I am now in a position at least to pretend to be a druid: in some circles, anyway.

Inevitable but depressing that verbiage and jargon should still be so strongly in the ascendant. In 1953 Michael Ayrton published a satire called *Tittivulus*. I am horrified to discover that it has never been reprinted. It seemed to me then, as it does now, to be a statement about language so valuable (and especially to students) that its academic neglect is in itself a symptom of the overall decline of our entire cultural system.

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Among this week's contributors:

ISTVÁN MÉSZÁROS teaches philosophy at the University of Sussex. His *The Search for Freedom*, volume one of *The Work of Sartre*, was reviewed in the NS on 14 March.

BRIAN HARRISON is Fellow and Tutor in Modern History at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He is the author of *Drink and the Victorians* and *Separate Spheres: The Opposition to Women's Suffrage in Britain*.

MICHAEL MEWSHAW is an American novelist whose books include *The Toll*, *Earthly Bread*, and *Waking Slow*. He teaches English at the University of Texas, and has written critical essays on Graham Greene.

NICHOLAS SHRIMPTON, lectures in English at the University of Liverpool.

CHARLES TOMLINSON's last collection of poems was *The Shaft*. He has edited the forthcoming *Oxford Book of Verse in English Translation*. He is Reader in English Poetry at the University of Bristol.

CHARLES LEWSEN has been a member of the BBC Radio Drama Script Unit. His own solo performances have celebrated Borges the Music Hall and Edward Lear whose *Nonsense* he is currently editing for Oxford University Press.

HENRY ROSEVEARE teaches history at King's College, London.

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Nicholas Shrimpton

Bourgeois v Bohemian

Schultz by J. P. DONLEAVY *Allen Lane* £5.95
Metroland by JULIAN BARNES *Cape* £4.95
The Night of the Funny Hats by ELSPETH DAVIE *Hamish Hamilton* £6.50
Snobs' Island by HENRIK TIKKANEN *Chatto* £4.95

Give satire half a chance and the beast will end up eating its own tail. J. P. Donleavy's new novel, *Schultz*, is a melancholy demonstration of this subtly self-destructive tendency. The formula is the one he started with, in *The Ginger Man*. A rip-roaring, hard-drinking and sexually rapacious hero successfully passes himself off in respectable society, thereby debunking its ideals. 'Modern comedy,' in Saul Bellow's words, 'has to do with the disintegrating outline of the worthy and humane Self, the bourgeois hero of an earlier age.' But the trick only works in certain conditions. We need to believe in the picture of society which the comedian presents. And we have to feel that there is a gap between conventional social standards and the tastes and drives of the iconoclastic hero.

Neither of these demands is met by *Schultz*, a novel both sloppily written and far too long. It is set in the world of the West End Theatre, where Sigmund Schultz, a Jewish producer from New York, is attempting to find backers for a musical. His two colleagues are called, with leaden humour, Lord Nectarine of Walham Green and 'Binky' Sunningdale. Their firm is known as Sperm Productions. All three partners spend their lives on the casting couch with an endless stream of willing starlets. But Donleavy is not writing satire, either of the English Theatre or of the English Aristocracy (having copulated their way through *Starlight*, the trio proceed with equal facility through the pages of *Debrett*). No standards are defied by such behaviour, for there is now nobody in the novel who holds any attitude other than the greedy hedonism of the eponymous hero. And if the point is to suggest that English society is greedy and hedonistic then the retort must be made that this erotic fairyland is not English society. The truth is that a world which Donleavy once mocked he now enjoys. Satire has shifted, by gradual stages, into celebration.

The bohemian alternative to bourgeois respectability has, in the process, been debased. Schultz gives no sense of an untamed libido on the rampage. Instead, his guzzling and swilling come straight from the pages of a second-rate restaurant guide, his sex from a glossy manual. Knickers fall, as thick as snowflakes, from Bond Street to Belgravia and I lost count of the number of improbably gorgeous women who opened their legs with a low moan at the sight of the hero's outsize wedding tackle. The worst failure of all is the humour. At one point a feeble practical joke is dragged out for more than 50 pages and the author is reduced to telling us that its (easily amused) perpetrator is 'wracked by his choked up guffaws'. Wracked I wasn't. *Schultz* sets out to be a life-enhancing romp, and ends up as a very tedious piece of soft-core porn.

The bohemianism which Donleavy still takes so seriously is deliciously mocked in Julian Barnes's first novel, *Metroland*. His heroes, as schoolboys, adopt the motto *épater la bourgeoisie*. But this grandiose ambition is promptly reduced to the level of 'epats', a thoroughly English field-sport in which the competitors attempt to shock respectable citizens for bets of sixpence a time. After this vision of the Decadence in short trousers, it is hard to take the idea of outrage too solemnly.

As the title suggests, however, the question of what it is to be bourgeois is also subjected to other forms of scrutiny. The central character, Christopher Lloyd, grows up in the suburbs of North-West London. He rejects this background but, unlike his schoolfriend Toni, eventually returns to it. Their discussions probe the problem of happiness. What is the distinction between contentment and capitulation? Are a wife and a family, a mortgage and a season ticket incompatible with sensibility and scepticism? Christopher's unfashionable assertions that they are not are handled with unusual sympathy, and the novel ends on a splendidly ambiguous reiteration of the colour symbolism which condemned suburbia in the opening chapters.

No reader of the NEW STATESMAN, of course, needs to be told that Julian Barnes can put a good sentence together. But can he create characters? The first section of this novel is an exercise in the post-Portnoy school of adolescent self-revelation, the 'Look what a shit I am' movement of which Martin Amis has hitherto been the outstanding practitioner. Barnes handles it cleverly enough, but relies on individual jokes and particular sharp perceptions (how many sophisticated aesthetes and intellectuals still remember their Ian Allen railway guides?) to hold it together. In the second section, though his unpromising subject is that old war-horse, student life in Paris, he suddenly moves much deeper. The account of a boy's emergence from the self-absorption of adolescence is grippingly and sensitively done. There is a slight weakness for cultural name-dropping and the preoccupation, in a *Bildungsroman*, with school does somehow seem depressingly English. But if all first works of fiction were as thoughtful, as subtle, as well constructed and as funny as *Metroland* there would be no more talk of the death of the novel.

Elspeth Davie won the Katherine Mansfield Prize in 1978 for her story 'The High Tide Talker'. Seen in that perspective her new collection, *The Night of the Funny Hats* is, frankly, disappointing. At times her painterly sense of landscape strengthens the character sketches and small parables in which she specialises. Only one story, however, really stands out and that is 'The Foothold', an eerie tale set in a shoe shop which cunningly reverses our initial expectations of its imagery.

Henrik Tikkanen's *Snobs' Island* takes us back to the topic of the bourgeoisie, this time in Finland, a country where they have traditionally been distinguished by a separate language. Throughout this autobiographical novel the steady degeneration of the author's father is offered as a symbol of the decline of the Swedish-Finnish middle-class. The accounts of battle with the Russians have a strangely dated air, and the rigidly Marxist interpretation of family life is sometimes restricting. But it provides a welcome if somewhat gloomy glimpse into a neglected culture.

Which Publisher?

Significant developments during the past year indicate that authors of books are becoming increasingly aware that they must defend their professional interests by collective action. This lesson was long ago absorbed by actors, musicians and journalists. The Society of Authors, like the Writers' Guild, is now a trade union. The two organisations are currently collaborating to investigate the performances of individual book publishers. A questionnaire has been sent out to members inviting them to rate, on a scale from 1 to 5, the degree of efficiency with which their publishers have handled their last three books. The criteria proposed are sensible and instructive:

(A) Strict adherence to terms of contract. (B) Promptness of payment of advance and royalties. (C) Quality of editorial interest in the MS & your work. (D) Efficiency of copy editing and proof reading, etc. (E) Quality of design and artwork. (F) Extent of consultation about jacket & jacket-copy. (G) Promptness in publication. (H) Quality & efficiency of promotion of book. (I) Efficiency of distribution of book to shops, etc. (J) Efficiency in selling home subsidiary rights (book club, paperback, etc.) (K) Efficiency in selling foreign subsidiary rights. (L) Promptness in passing on money arising from (J) and (K). (M) Consultation/information about remaindering and going out of print. (N) Irrespective of contractual requirements, extent of readiness to inform and consult. (O) Rating of publisher's performance overall.

The NS hopes to report the results of this questionnaire when they become available.

Charles Tomlinson

The Gate

Someone has set up a gate here
In this unfenced field. Waiting for its fence
It teases the sight. Is it that one
feels half-blind,
The mind demanding an enclosure that
the eye
Cannot supply it with? Or is it an X-ray eye
One has, melting wall to a nothing,
And the grass greening up at one, that returns
A look with intimations of a place unspaced
And thus not quite there? The mocked mind,
Busy with surroundings it can neither
bound nor unbind,
Cedes to the eye the pleasure of passing
Where, between the gate's five bars,
Perpetual seawaves play of
innumerable grasses.

The Daylight Owl

The daylight owl blinks blind and cannot fly:
It must await the dark to see by:
Pitiful predator, a mob of birds would soon
Discount those talons blunted by the noon
If once they found you, force you from
that post
You timorously haunt, the
sun-sequestered ghost
Of that shape that will drop from the trees
at the first star
With eye as accurate as the bat's radar.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Miracle, Mystery and Morality

CHARLES LEWSEN reviews two current radio sequences

Between now and Easter there is a chance to enjoy one of those exercises in complementary listening that are likely to prove rarer or less enterprising after the cuts. This week we have the eighth of 13 episodes of William Langland's *Piers Plowman*, in an abridged translation (Mondays and Fridays at 9.15, Radio 3) with commentary by Terence Tiller; on the 20th March (7.30, Radio 3) David Buck's three-part cycle of mystery plays *Image of Man* began.

Langland's poem opens with the dream of a landscape containing a Tower of Truth, a Dungeon of Care and, between, a middle earth teeming with King, Lunatic, and anthropomorphised Cat and Rats, along with clerics, jurymen and peasants. To a modern reader, that, in its breadth and detail, suggests an allegorical picture by Giorgione or Bosch, or Breughel's *Fall of Icarus* – though Langland may have drawn his inspiration from the setting of outdoor theatrical shows which, before the period of moving wagons brought the plays for consecutive viewing to street corners, used to spread out Heaven, Hell, Eden and Bethlehem in a series of static booths for simultaneous viewing. The substance of the *Piers Plowman* is Langland's painful search for salvation, and it takes him through a series of landscapes, earthly and spiritual, in which the hero, Piers the Ploughman is, by turns, the embodiment of honest toil, Charity, and Christ in person.

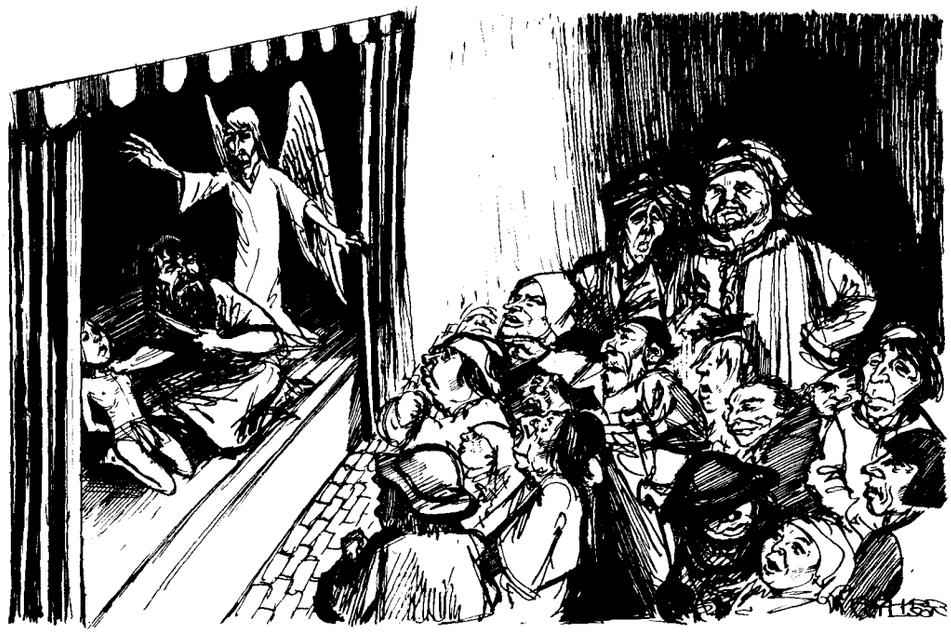
The allegory would seem tiresome today, were it not for Langland's wit, imagination, and zest for human foible, which give substance to his veiled attacks on the corrupt jurors and forestallers at the court of John of Gaunt.

In Piers Plowright's production, *Conscience*, played by the superb Adrian Egan, condemns *Meed the Maid* for 'her teetotum twat and tale-bearing tongue', and Brian Haines's *Sloth* precisely pins down his own faults: 'I have been priest and parson these thirty years past,/Yet cannot sol-fa, say Mass, or read the Lives of the Saints;/But I can find a hare in a furrowed field.'

And hard by the hill called 'Bear-no-false-witness, forested with Florins', *Grace,* in his Manor of Mercy, bright as the sun, declares himself willing to 'throw wide the wicket-gate that the woman closed / When Adam and Eve ate unroasted apples'.

Tiller's translation seems sharper and, more direct, less fanciful and legato than either of the other verse translations that I have looked at; and it has the advantage over J. F. Goodridge's prose version (Penguin) of preserving Langland's alliterative form. It is immensely speakable and, in a production that eschews all atmospheric devices other than brief snatches of haunting pastoral music by Michael Berkeley, it is the words that have to hold one through the progress of Langland's pilgrimage towards disillusion at the coming of Anti-christ.

There are some awkward transitions from narrative to dramatised speech, which could have been avoided if the characters had been allowed to handle some of their own 'he saids', and Hugh Burden's dry narration as Langland for me lacks visionary wonder. But there is some startlingly fine work from John Church, an actor with an uncanny affinity for the microphone, and an exceptional capacity for projecting sanctity. He is to be cherished.



The surviving Mystery play texts are late, probably 15th- and 16th-century accretions; but the guildsmen first wrote or improvised them at the time Langland started his anguished satire, in the wake of the Black Death. However, while Langland is a pessimist, pensive in the shadow of the plague, the guildsmen are optimists – exultant, perhaps, in survival; and while he painfully searches for salvation, first through faith, then through *Do-Well, Do-Better* and *Do-Best*, they are content, in the main, to affirm and accept salvation through the Incarnation – attaching, in Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, some importance to faith, but treating good works, in *The Last Judgment*, as something of a parenthetical afterthought.

In conflating one mystery cycle from four, and drawing on individual plays like the exquisite Broom version of *Abraham and Isaac*, David Buck is only furthering something long ago begun. The different English cycles borrowed from each other, and possibly from a French version. Unlike John Barton in his treatment of Euripides and Aeschylus in *The Greeks*, Buck has not come up against massive individual geniuses whose work will be compromised by conflation. Characters in the cycles tend to appear in only one episode each, and there is unity of tone in the lengthier presentation of Christ, who is not subject to the kind of experimental scepticism that obliges Janet Suzman at the Aldwych to play a key figure first as a figure of farce, then as a creature of comedy.

Choosing a jogging four-beat line, Buck has composed a rhyming text that drives the action forward at a tremendous pace. He has mixed mediaevalisms with his modern diction, and Martin Jenkins's production keeps the mediaeval audience within our awareness through the episode that I have been able to hear. This is the one in which Satan (Peter Jeffrey) eggs on God (Dennis Quilley) to test Abraham's faith, with the speed and guile of the Leader of the Opposition needling the Prime Minister on an extremely lively Thursday afternoon. Perhaps the pace was a bit much in the following episode, because Stephen Murray could not give quite the necessary vulnerability to Abraham's pretence to Sarah that he was not going to slaughter their son; but the overall effect was so exciting that I was amazed that Jenkins's crowd did not burst into yells of approval when the Archangel saved young Isaac from his death.

The following episode, in which a vigorous young Christ (John Rowe) demanded of his Father to be made Man, was a magnificent account of muscular Christianity, and a swift and exciting unifying of the Old and New Testaments in terms of father and son relationship. With the Eclipse at the time of the Crucifixion, with the ancient pun upon Son and Sun enshrined in the Mummers' Plays, this theme returns excitingly to crown a production that, clearly is going to cock a snook at the text's claim that the actors are amateurs – and rightly so.

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Theatre – 1

Benedict Nightingale

The Pity of It

Othello by SHAKESPEARE *Olivier*
Make and Break by MICHAEL FRAYN *Lyric, Hammersmith*
For Whom the Bell Chimes by GRAHAM GREENE *Haymarket, Leicester*

Othello's tragic flaw isn't primarily an unnatural proneness to jealousy. The green-eyed monster that afflicts him is considerably less capricious and arbitrarily venemous than the one rampaging inside Leontes's head in *The Winter's Tale*, and might well have been matched for ferocity had Claudio been told of Hero's supposed promiscuity after instead of before the wedding ceremony in *Much Ado*. The Elizabethans and Jacobeans, especially those fated to be characters in plays, felt far more strongly about wifely chastity than we seem to do now. No, Othello's fundamental fault is gullibility, a myopic inability to distinguish surface from essence, reputation from reality, and Iago from honesty; and this is very particularly so of the Moor which Paul Scofield offers at the National, a stately warrior whose facial boot-polish, off-centre diphthongs and slightly ingenuous air all emphasise how little he's at home among the clubby Venetians, and how unlikely to rumble any of their wiles. Imagine a blue whale too gratified by his prominence in a school of whites to notice that the snout nearest him is actually that of a shark, and you'll have some sense of Scofield's size and simplicity.

Simplicity is his attraction, and his undoing. Unlike some of my critical colleagues, I admired this performance most at or near its start. Then it is that Scofield chooses to radiate a touching pride and delight at having landed such a catch as Felicity Kendal's Desdemona, herself endowed by nature with eyes and a smile that might be mistaken as flirtatious, but actually reflect an open, affectionate, demonstrative spirit. You can see older men nowadays treating young women with the same gingerly gentleness, rather as if they're afraid of chipping the porcelain prize that has flatteringly, bewilderingly bestowed itself upon them. Scofield injects great tenderness into his 'perdition catch my soul, but I do love thee', and responds with a sort of paralysed horror when the first doubts seep like acid through his skull. It was all too good to be true, wasn't it? How could this perfect creature love him, *him*? We feel that a peculiarly ugly violation has occurred. Someone's dirty fingernails are in, up and scrabbling around the lovers' innards: something innocent and vulnerable is being tampered with. As Othello himself aptly opines, 'the pity of it, Iago, O Iago, the pity of it.'

But hurt has to turn into vindictiveness. Murderous jealousy, if not primary, must certainly be secondary. The trouble with Scofield's Othello is that he always seems more likely to mooch about regretfully licking his wounds than to set about avenging them; and when the script insists that he does just that, he becomes operatic and implausible. Indeed, it's as if he throws the invisible switch that has been activating his heart and glands, and transfers the responsibility for his performance partly on to his basso profundo voice, which echoes ever more resonantly up from the crypt he keeps beneath his diaphragm, and partly on to his shoulders, belly and bottom, all of which begin massively to twitch. 'Goats and monkeys!', a cry which should suggest that those very animals are gnawing their way through his bowels, becomes a Verdiesque rumble, prefaced by a great jerk of the pelvis and followed by a half-stumbling, half-staggering canter offstage. The intention may be to show us Othello the poseur, Othello the narcissist, Othello the flamboyant showman but, given the rather more fragile Othello we've began to know, the effect is incongruous, external, and not very moving.

This is a grave fault, but not one that sinks Peter Hall's production, which is a bit sedately paced but generally better acted than the other Shakespeare revivals recently cranked out by his South-Bank powerhouse. Michael Bryant does what can be done to explain Iago, bunching his face and souring his vowels when he comes to references to his own desire for Desdemona, Othello's supposed affair with Emilia, Cassio's unjust promotion and exasperatingly superior looks; but, as always, the supposed motives don't justify the degree of his malignity. Iago is gratuitously evil, and gratuitous evil is always something of a mystery. So mainly Bryant plays the genial psychopath, relaxedly grinning from beneath his prematurely snowy short-back-and-sides whether he's ingratiating himself with Desdemona, getting Cassio drunk, skewering Roderigo's tripes, or going off to be lingeringly tortured to death; and, on the whole, he does it rivetingly well. His victim may have sent us dry-eyed from the theatre: this baleful prankster must have given many of us queasy thoughts as we crept upstairs to bed.

I find it difficult to square our reputation as a nation of shiftless idlers with my own experience, which is that everyone is running very hard to stay in the same economic place; and so, I suspect, does Michael Frayn. The workoholic is the timely subject of his *Make and Break*, which occurs at a Frankfurt trade-fair, and around an exhibition mounted by makers of walls that swing, swivel and indeed do everything but somersault. Since the evening opened with a smiling German and an uncomprehending Japanese being steered around this domestic maze, and continued with a characteristically galvanic entrance by Leonard Rossiter, I began to wonder if we weren't in for a dramatic updating of Frayn's industrial frolic, *The Tin Men*. Not so. He is still learning how to reconcile his sly, satiric wit with what's surely a more melancholic temperament and a bleaker outlook than is generally recognised, and *Make and Break* has its lapses both of tone and momentum; but it's a genuine attempt to deepen his work and, by the end, an impressive one.

What galvanises Garrard, the ageing whizz-kid unstoppably played by Rossiter? His life is spent manically maximising profits for other people, and his conversation is no less hectic, all sudden U-turns and dizzying tangents. He finds a few spare moments to seduce the comfy company secretary – nicely characterised and nicely played by Prunella Scales, who brings a glum serenity to a classic little speech about how to enjoy boredom and relish misery – but the brief contact achieved could only hesitantly be called human. Even the apparent arrival of his long-awaited heart attack, followed by his best friend's unlooked-for death from a more authentic one, seems to do nothing but accelerate the perpetuum-mobile machine inside him. A born-again Christian and an amateur Buddhist are on hand to add perspective to the situation and provide verbal target practice for Garrard, who bombards them with disorienting questions; but they change nothing except, perhaps, our own view of the protagonist, a man who will clearly drive himself to delirium, death, anything, rather than confront the emptiness inside him. Workoholism, it seems, is a form of compulsive escapism, and there are no addiction centres specialising in its treatment.

'Semper eadem' is the all-too-appropriate motto of the City of Leicester, which itself seems enough to make any animate being want to kick in its concrete and does much to explain the hoodlum glee of the late Joe Orton, its local playwright. Even the elder statesman of our literature, Graham Greene, has developed some such allergic itch, judging by the anarchic tenor of his new double-bill. This begins with an anecdote in which a monosyllabic young actor coolly rejects the arty director who has been intimidating him with fulsome tributes to Sir John, Sir Ralph, and his playwright's obscure beauties, prime among them the celebrated 'Privet pause'; and it then proceeds to show unreconstructed man destructively frolicking among the automated mods and cons of the most soulless of white-tiled flatlets.

The bed whisks down to reveal a throttled hag. The murderer offloads the crime onto a conman who has chanced by. Enter a vengeful and possibly psychotic charity bigwig, who smashes in the wall, provoking a noisome Scot to roar in kilted from next door. Enter a stupid constable, followed by a transsexual police inspector. It might indeed all have been concocted by a somewhat more gentlemanly Orton; there is, however, one trouble, and a big one: it just isn't very funny.

SANTIAGO ALVAREZ

"Recorder of the Revolution"

A season of films by the distinguished Cuban documentarist from 1-10 April. Mr Alvarez will make a personal appearance at the NFT to discuss his work on 4 April at 5 p.m. Admission free.

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Television

Julian Barnes

Eleventh Men

The bell-fag tolled the knell of breaking day; the marquee was hauled up on the green-sward; and in the afternoon, the golden labrador slept quietly under the deck-chair while the strains of the school orchestra traducing Dvořak trailed softly across the cricket pitch. 'Do your family not get on horses?' 'I was bolted with in the Argentine and I've never recovered.' All it needed was a potty-brandishing toddler being applauded for her stools by a squash-racquet-bearing father, and we would have been at the start of a Simon Gray play. Instead, we were reaching the sunlit end of *Public School* (BBC-2), and the lazy scene-setting was turning out once again to be the substance. There were end-of-term japes with plastic spiders; a young master taking 'Prayers in F Social' started off on a long metaphor about being the eleventh man in a cricket team, and trod on his stumps; we glimpsed something called 'British Bulldog', which looked like an early version of rugby, without a ball, played in the dark to the accompaniment of a jazz trio; and, even more strangely, we watched cherubic Radleians pogoing away at their own punk disco, manifestly ill-at-ease with the rhythms of their less privileged co-evals.

Since the series began, the number of inquiries for Radley prospectuses has tripled, and other public schools report a doubling of would-be parents. *The Times,* however, blithely assures those of us worried by the BBC's generosity with its airtime, that the Corporation is even now trying to find a comprehensive school for a similar set of programmes. This, I suppose, is what they think of as balance; and they doubtless assume, as a corollary, that if the comprehensive comes across well, families will start moving into the relevant catchment area. It doesn't seem very likely; or, if likely, desirable.

In the meantime, aware that it had a slight stir on its hands, BBC-2 followed up with a strangely civil *Public School Discussion,* in which Neil Kinnock managed to make the nearest practical date for abolition sound at least three parliaments away (by which time he himself might be... shhhh, you know where). Given a further platform, the Warden, Dennis Silk-by-name, maintained that what Radley really offered was 'pastoral care of a very concerned sort', and suggested that 'people haven't grasped the revolution that's taken place in independent schools' – meaning, it transpired, that parents no longer send kids there in order to make them members of the ruling class. Maybe not – or not so purely; but parents know they're buying academic excellence, small classes, greater chance of a university place, and friends for the boy to go beagling with. How many times, I wonder, is the sort of conversation the Warden postulates actually heard across English breakfast tables 'I say, old thing, frightfully cheap place, this Radley .whatsit. Only three thou a year. What about sending the lad there?' 'Good idea, Biffo darling – they do say the pastoral care is of a *very* concerned sort.'

Few Radley parents, I imagine, decided last Sunday night to take their children away from the College and enter them for the sort of comprehensive attended by the *Bloody Kids* of Stephen Poliakoff's play (ATV). There, prefects were casually brutal, and masters passed unRadleian remarks like, 'You seem to seep into every corner of the school, like the smells from the school dinner.' Outside, life proved just as heartless, parentless and loveless, whether in tacky disco, desolate shopping centre, or a police station which resembled an East German border post. Characters stared at each other and at the camera as blankly as Chinese waiters; some of them, in another of Poliakoff's locations, *were* Chinese waiters. But even when the screen was crowded, it felt chill and empty.

However, if the play was long on atmosphere (there were some splendid shots of the neon-lit concrete jungle), it was also long on length. The music began as Shadows B-sides, but settled quickly for Spaghetti Western clangour: this may have been intended to point up parallels between that self-indulgent film genre and the violence, kidnapping, chases, etc, of Poliakoff's script; but it also reminded us that one of the characteristics of such westerns is interminable length. Another loose-hanging influence on *Bloody Kids* seemed to be the road movie. If so, this was less a road movie than a ring-road movie; and, at an hour and threequarters, for all its beguiling surface, *Kids* became a pestering nuisance. It was hard to tell whether the language was meant to be realistic but just happened to be awkwardly written, or whether it was meant to be unrealistically heightened to suit the stylisation of the direction. Still, it wasn't a question that ferreted away in one's mind for very long after the closing titles.

For urban spiritual desolation plus better script plus even more stunning photography you had to watch the second part of *Thérèse Raquin,* which was shown after my carping remarks of last week went to press. Part Two was immensely better, taut and fierce as we followed the lovers failing to handle their differing guilts.

Music

Andrew Clements

Fresh Air

Gerald Barry *ICA*

A young Irish composer who aligns himself fairly and squarely with the mainstream of the European avant garde is a rare bird indeed. Gerald Barry was born in County Clare in 1952, studied at University College, Dublin, and then moved around Europe, working with Peter Schat in Holland and Friedrich Cerha in Vienna and finishing up in Germany as a pupil of Stockhausen and Kagel. He now lives in Cologne, but maintains his Irish connections: his music was the singular success of the last Dublin Festival of 20th-century Music, and he has just completed a programme on new music in Ireland for RTE. The concert of Barry's work at the ICA on February 24 was part of Adrian Jack's MusICA series, but was conveniently incorporated into 'A Sense of Ireland', a breath of fresh air among the otherwise rather stolid musical contribution to the Republic's London festival.

On that evidence, Barry's is an individual voice, sure of intention and accomplished of execution. He has selected an artistic stance that is unusual among his British and Irish contemporaries; there is more of Kagel than Stockhausen in his work, and a marked preference for the fringes of 'music theatre'. The two music-theatre pieces in the ICA programme revealed a gentle, personal humour, far removed from the yearning for universality which makes much of Stockhausen's dramatic work unpalatable, and much closer to Kagel's own explorations of the conventions of performance in his *Staatstheater*. It is a difficult medium for the young composer to control, but Barry's ideas are shapely and crisply outlined.

Décolletage (1978/9) is described by the composer as 'a highly formalised presentation of the performer to the audience... she moves from an almost clinical analysis of her body to an exploration of her whole personality'. The piece is written for a soprano, but only a handful of notes are sung. The rest of the 15-minute long *scena* is mimed, focusing on the minutiae of body and facial gestures and building up to a final hectic scramble of mock photographic poses; the detailed import of *Décolletage* is elusive (and not helped by the composer's selection of an extract from Goethe's *Iphigenia in Tauris* as an accompanying note), but its success in sustaining its dramatic vocabulary and structure is unquestionable.

The soloist in *Décolletage* and the other work involving soprano was the remarkable American Beth Griffith. In *Things That Gain By Being Painted* (1977), for soprano, speaker, cello and piano, the starting point is the *Pillow Book* of Sei Shonagon, a marvellously self-satisfied, snobbish critique of life at the Japanese court. Extracts fron the book were read by Ms Griffith in an outrageous Deep South accent, occasionally resorting to song; a second hidden narrator added punctuation while cello and piano exchanged motifs, hovering between tonality and atonality. The effect was always witty and packed with incident; occasionally it teetered on the edge of Footlights-type revue – the serious high-art cellist matched against the garrulous socialite – but Barry's sure sense of pacing prevented trivialisation.

The specifically musical content of *Things That Gain* is undoubtedly subsidiary to its dramatic and literary conceits, but the pair of instrumental works – both with awkwardly graphic titles – that Lontano contributed to the evening gave some indication of the direction of Barry's most recent compositions. —, written in 1979, explores the basic mechanics of composition; a single melodic line is clothed in decorative scales, the melody is repeated and the scale patterns alter, acquire chords and eventually reform as sequences of modes, until eventually the melody is heard without decoration, harmonised in sugary, clichéd chords. Played more urgently perhaps than Lontano managed, it could be a fascinating skein of shifting lines and allusions. The instrumentation is apparently abitrary, but it's difficult to divorce the effect of the piece from

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its ensemble of cellos, violas, bass clarinets and harpsichord – sumptuous sounds that remain in the memory long after the music itself has faded.

Ø, also written last year, transfers the problems of ornamentation to two pianos and adds to them an exercise in co-ordination. It was by a long way the driest piece in the programme, its function as a compositional and technical study not transcended by its musical content, but the very shortcomings emphasised the high quality and originality of much of the rest of Barry's music. It remains to be seen whether he can transfer his gifts for the attractive miniature and grateful image to a larger canvas; for the moment, the omens are very favourable.

Films

John Coleman

Hanky-Panky

Get Out Your Handkerchiefs (X) *Curzon*
The Killing of a Chinese Bookie (AA) *Electric; Little Bit Ritzie, Brixton, from 30 March*
Silver Dream Racer (AA) *Dominion*
When Time Ran Out . . . (A) *Warner West End; Scene; ABCs Fulham and Edgware Roads*

The nuttiest film in some time – and one of the more high-and-low surreal cinematic occasions – proves to be a French piece of dressing: and am I ever surprised? Bertrand Blier's *Get Out Your Handkerchiefs* is a laugh a minute, a weep the next, a groan (well, honesty must play its part in this review) the next. But one never quite knows where to locate it. It is *Jules et Jim* plus a dash of Vigo plus a spasm of Buñuel plus utterly tremendous performances got out of such a dreary Gallic matinée idol as Gérard Depardieu, a bloke called Patrick Dewaere and – what might rightly be termed – assorted characters: neat notably, Carole Laure as a zombie-like wife, a hell of a knitter, to M. Depardieu who with a kind of persuasive bizarrerie decides to give her away to a bemused fellow in a bistro: anything to get her – as it were – going. What happens subsequently is indescribable, only in the sense that there is a very great deal of it: the men buddy up over the catatonic and extremely strippable missus (she is a beauty and the camera makes a point of this).

Then enters an androgynous-appearing 13-year-old, actually a lad, who – while having his own problems, to do with being a rich kid with an I.Q. of 158 – needs love, both kinds – and gets both kinds. He becomes a form of therapy for the hitherto numb lady: there is a wild entry in to a school dormitory that has to be seen to be, however grudgingly, credited. There are huge, running gags, specifically one about Mozart; there is a large madness, which also incorporates a thoroughly irritated male neighbour who drops in to complain about all that Mozart at 3 a.m. and is then seduced by the very odd couple to stick around, drinks arriving with something like metronomic regularity. He, just like that, is enlisted in the crazy gang. It's one of those get-together movies which harks back to a very strong and interesting French tradition of cinema, the easy, companionable Renoir courtyard stuff: but with that zany difference which is all too likely a reflection of our zanier, less genial times. The boy, incidentally, who is either superb or superbly put through his motions by Blier, is given the name Riton on my hand-out. He deserves, one would hazard, every credit. The problem of *real* accreditation is of the did-he-didn't he, should-juveniles-be-allowed Mary Whitehouse order. I recognise it while feeling it to be a pretty dumb one.

John Cassavetes is a strange and beautiful and haunted improvisational American director, at best one of the best. *The Killing of a Chinese Bookie*, which the BFI in its peculiar corporate wisdom gave its Special Award to back in 1976 after a London Film Festival showing, is one of his lesser efforts, but still extraordinary enough to make most of the current product look the crud it is. Ben Gazzara, another of those actors I have trouble in liking, is in the odd event very powerful and gentle as the proprietor of a Los Angeles strip joint who finds himself up to his stiff neck in it. Girls are not his bother: I don't understand this, since he seems such a visual nothing but no doubt there are ladies around to assure me otherwise.

The most astonishing thing on a little reflection, about this aberrant interlude in Mr Cassavetes' career is the very alternative ways it is lit – now all night-street glow and glitter, then all filmy and bleached-out: and these visual shifts give it, for me, an enormous attraction. The story is about Gazzara running up a bad gambling debt, when the boys move in on him, forcing him – in fact – to shoot that Chink of the title, a heavy even they are frightened of. Then Gazzara is supposed to be wiped out, in turn, but he seems cocky and well at the close.

This is merely one of several twists and turns the plot takes. Some 20 minutes have been taken out of the original version. It would not be too arduous to think of where a few more might have been lost. For instance, what in old Berlin cabaret's name is the sad clown who is – in the movie's terms – his star turn doing, or pretending to being doing there? It is not, after all (and Hollywood can't help, apparently, coming on strong even when it should be settling for the low-life club Gazzara is assumed to be running – my God, the women in his Crazy Horse West physically outrank their Parisian counterparts – if I ever envied a casting director it would be for his/her role in the business) as if there is anything approaching accuracy in the physical lay-out. And yet . . .

Quickly, two nonsenses: *Silver Dream Racer*, about nice David Essex having to oppose his person to that of Beau Bridges – they are motor-cycle competitors and this is one of those foolishnesses relating to Bike-versus-Love; or sport over all. It is, alas, another of those irremediably commercial enterprises that will reckon to get its costs back on a couple of pop songs Mr Essex indulges in; and – to be straight with you – some formidably well-staged bike-racing. About *When Time Ran Out . . .* with appalling model shots and a star-studied cast you can read on the underground posters for yourselves, there is nothing to add except (it is a Saturday morning cinema disaster film) yes, it finally, mercifully did.

Weekend Competition

No 2610 **Set by P. W. R. Foot**

What home thoughts from abroad would Browning or any other past poet have if they were composing today? Sixteen lines max., by 11 April. (People who point out that Browning himself took 20 lines will have their entries shredded.)

No 2607 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

Dean Swift's modest proposals for solutions to modern problems.

Report **By Fat Jeff**

This column has not, hitherto, had occasion to reprimand Bill Greenwell – he always seemed such a nice boy, even if he does wear his hair in a rather regrettable pony tail. Of late, however, his entries have arrived accompanied by grumbling postscripts to the effect that such-and-such would never have happened in Spiro's day. Rumour has it that he has also been corresponding with the King Over the Water (a.k.a. Fatboy). Listen, sonny: just because you live in the wilds of Exmoor you needn't imagine that we are unable, whenever the whim takes us, to rusticate you as abruptly as we did your corpulent chum; so let's have no more heckling from the back benches.

As for this week: a number of goodish stabs, with Yorke and Anthony coming nearest the brutal simplicity of the original. Seven quid for each entry printed.

Since, by my Computation, there be now in this Queendom upwards of two million Unemployed Male Earners, I make no Doubt that all parties will welcome a Scheme which, in all Humility, I submit before the Publick which will greatly allay disbursements from the State Coffers, and in addition, will furnish gainful Occupations to Men of Science.

I am persuaded by a nautical Friend that it would be a simple Matter to ship all idle Persons to the Americas, there herd them into a wide and capacious Desert out of the way of Common Men, and drop a Mighty Bomb upon them. The Holocaust over, Alchemists, Physicians and sundry Men of Scientific Inclination may then be set the task of ascertaining in what Manner the Victims have been afflicted, the which Knowledge will be to the utmost edification of the remainder of Mankind who may expect a like Fate at any Moment.

JIM YORKE

I am advised by an academic whose opinion I value that there is a satisfying solution to one of the problems which currently assails the public-minded attempts to educate the sons of the deserving poor. Those leaving the schools barely literate, following the failure of the shire councils to provide them with adequate tutors and equipment, are nonetheless stout fellows of rude health and fully capable, if adequately bridled and saddled, of carrying on their backs one or more of their unfortunate younger brothers who would otherwise have no means of transportation from remote hamlets to their place of learning.

JAMES ANTHONY ESQUIRE

Observing the Dog Lovers' benign approval of their Pets' Urinating and Defecating on Publick Pleasances, Highways and Doorsteps, no Hound Owner would repine to allow the Citizens of the Parish equal liberty to discharge their Faeces and Piss on the private Gardens, Pathways and Doorways of the said Dog Lovers, who should be obliged by Law to

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put the Sign Of The Turd on the Front Door of their Houses, indicating the House and Grounds to be a Convenience of Relief for Local Citizens caught short when journeying. Those divers humbler Pet Owners living in upstairs Apartments or Lodgings should equally share the Sum Total of Canine Stools deposited in the Parish, the Latter to be Gathered up, distributed and paid for, on Delivery of the Ordure.

GERRY HAMILL

If the Muscovites attack the Turks and the Prime Minister wishes to show her displeasure, she will explode one of our own bombs in London, Bristol, Canterbury or wherever she wills. And, likewise, if the Russians dislike our actions, they will show their contumely and disdain by exploding one of their bombs in St Petersburg, or Moscow, or Kieff.

This will have the benefit that instead of the enemy's destruction of the fairest part of the country and the best of its people, we can choose for destruction the ugliest parts of our cities, where only the dross of society, such as work in the meanest trades, and live dull lives, do dwell; and, being people of little sensibility, they would not much miss their lives. In like manner the Russians could select parts of their country peopled by the least worthy, such as Jews and Tartars. So this admirable arrangement would save rocket fuel, bring certainty in planning, expunge the disgusting parts of our cities and keep the beautiful, lead to the disappearance of the common people and the exaltation of the best, and over-population, and advance the quality of the human race.

J. MALONE

It is indeed distressing to witness the melancholy spectacle of the elderly, whose number has of late swollen so prodigiously. It is commonly agreed that the sight of these withered ancients pleading with already overburthened friends or relatives for food, shelter, or even a lift to the Post Office, is cause for shame. Having deliberated long, and noted the extreme stress experienced by those who charitably expend their lives in caring for the aged, I humbly proffer this proposal. I suggest that those reaching the pensionable age of sixty years (or sixty-five, in the case of women who have not exhausted themselves through gainful employment) be given over to private medical concerns, where they may be painlessly dissected, to ascertain the actual causes of age. This will meanwhile lift from the Chancellor's shoulders the burthen of much arithmetic, and likewise reduce the quantity of politicians, there being many themselves considerably advanced in years.

BILL GREENWELL

There hath been of late much talk of restraining the excesses of youth by the employment of a harshly punitive regimen. Such measures, deeply objectionable as they must needs be to all persons of sensibility, would not, in my opinion, prove effective. Far preferable would be a permissive approach. Hostels, I suggest, should be provided, conveniently adjacent to busy motorways, in which the young of both sexes would be given the opportunity – at no cost to themselves, and with substantial savings to the public – to experiment with the new life styles that so clearly appeal to them. Hard drugs would be freely available, as well as unlimited supplies of alcohol. These, together with the provision of motor cycles, flick-knives and fire-arms, would lead, I feel confident, to a rapid and permanent decline in the delinquent population, to the great benefit of the public at large.

PETER PETERSON

No longer, alas, cowed into proper submission to the whim of its divinely-ordained masters, the labouring class spawns offspring whose manifold depravities bleed society of goods, energy and coin. To conscribe these young felons into public service is an expedient at once too costly and too lenitive: to permit their breeding – with that wanton fertility so vilely incident to the lower orders – is unthinkable. The answer? Sell them, gentlemen! At once replenish your vacant coffers and root out a social canker by selling them into serfdom in that great Slavic land where the wholesome traditions of human bondage still flower and burgeon. If it be objected that this vermin has cost us more to rear and nurture than we can ever hope to recoup by its sale, consider whether what is good enough for our best butter is not also good enough for our worst scions.

MARTIN FAGG

Tony Miles

Chess

No 173 **December Problems**

The December problems were not too difficult. In **problem 158 (8/6pl/K7/8/P7/8/2k5/8)** White wins by a neat king tour: 1.K-N5, P-N4 (else 2.P-R5 wins); 2.K-B4! K-Q7 (2 . . . P-N5; 3.K-Q4 wins the p); 3.K-Q4! K-K7; 4.K-K4! K-B7; 5.K-B5! K-B6. Now not 6.KxP? K-K5! drawing, but 6.P-R5! wins as the pawn queens with check. I forget where I found this problem but I am fairly sure it was a study, in which case Mr V. Ghate has found a cook: on his fourth move White can also win with 4.K-K5! and if . . . K-B6; 5.P-R5 wins again, whilst . . . K-B7; 5.K-B5, K-B6; 6.P-R5 transposes, and . . . K-K6 allows 5.P-R5, P-N5; 6.P-R6, P-N6; 7.P-R7, P-N7; 8.P-R8=Q P-N8=Q; 9.Q-R7ch winning.

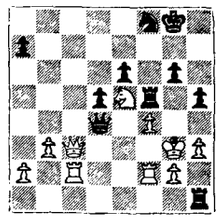
Problem 159 (8/8/2P2K2/8/6pr/6K1/R7/8) White wins economically with 1.K-N5 threatening R-R3ch. Now if 1. . . . R-R2 (or 1); 2.R-R3ch and 3.KxP wins simply; if 1 . . . R-R8; 2.R-QB2, K-B6 (or . . . R-R1; 3.R-B3ch); 3.R-B3ch, K-K5 (else 4.P-B7, R-R1; 5.KxP); 4.P-B7, R-R1; 5.P-B8=Q, RxQ; 6.RxR, P-N6; 7.R-B3, P-N7; 8.R-KN3 wins, so the only try is 1 . . . K-R6 when 2.R-R2ch! KxR; 3.KxR, P-N6; 4.P-B7, P-N7; 5.P-B8=Q, P-N8=Q; 6.Q-R3mate!

Problem 160 (8/7p/b5NB/1p3K2/8/8/6Pk/8) was another endgame study. 1.N-R4 (not 1.N-B4? K-N6 and 2 . . . B-N2 draws), K-N6; 2.B-Q2! The point, if Black continues to hunt the pawn he runs into a mating net. On 2 . . . KxN comes 3.B-R1ch, K-R5; 4.P-N4ch, K-R3; 5.K-B6 and 6.B-Q2mate. If 2 . . . B-N2, 3.B-K1ch wins so 2 . . . B-B1ch; 3.K-N5, P-R3ch; 4.K-R5, B-N5ch; 5.KxP! KxN (else K-N5); 6 B-K1mate.

I did receive a few comments on the length (or, rather, shortness) of the Christmas column and on the non-appearance of a solution to Problem 158. Both were caused by a severe lack of space in the Christmas edition and are to be regretted.

December prizewinners: Messrs R. Brown, Cornforth, Deshmukh, Ghate and Sahasrabudhe £7 each; Messrs Johnson, Nash and Taylor £4 each and consolation prizes of £1.50 to Messrs Garfath and Sobey.

Problem 173

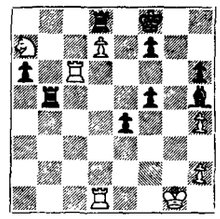


Black to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked no later than 2 April.

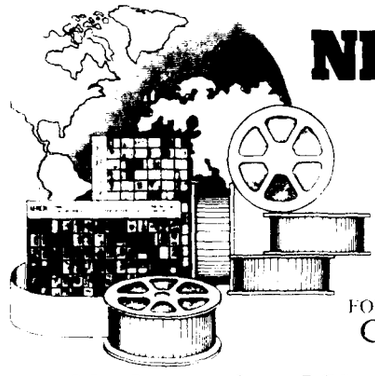
Solution to Problem 171

1. . . . Q-K7! Resigns. If 2.R(2)xQ, R-B8ch; 3.RxR, NxRch and . . . RxRmate. If 2.R(2)-Q1, Q-B8ch! mates similarly and if 2.N-B6ch, RxN wins a piece.

Problem 172



Due to a printing error last week's chess diagram was transposed. We show it now correctly. Black to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked no later than 2 April.



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Salamanca 28: 'See Why?'

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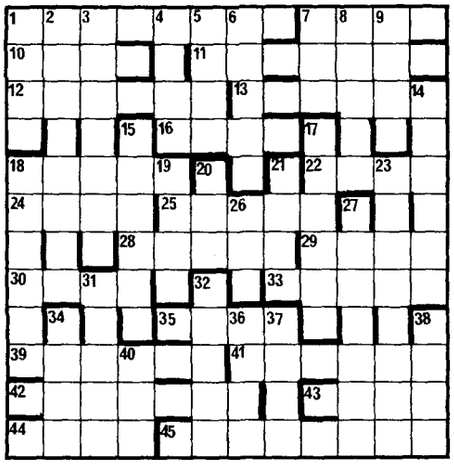


The eight unclued answers are of a type and their unchecked letters make THE EEL CRIME. On completion of the puzzle solvers uncertain of the nature of these, or desirous of further illustration, should completely shade in all answers *ending in Y*. **(Every word is in Chambers 1977.)**

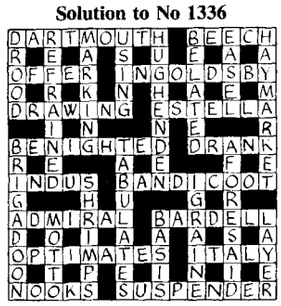
ACROSS

10 I turn my head to express my grief (4)
11 Sun almost eclipsed by minor planet breaks past (7)
13 Signs of cross – assistance turned to by head of chapter? (6)
16 Mac's wearisome – still about, but dead inside (4)
18 Squirt – a child that's covered First Reader? (5)
22 African grass attaining a length, note (4)
24 Whales – some for caaing? (4)
25 It's awfully early to prepare for the next sitting (5)
28 Motorcycle contest consisting of traditional race, something for old gamblers? (5)
29 Irish assembly's short servant (4)
30 Cut pin, cut rod etc., for spinner? (4)
33 Rest on board? They do (5)
35 Unnamed flower of old – it bursts out suddenly in Scotland (4)
39 A large measure of hollands, no longer taken for a night-cap? (6)
42 Mohammed of Middle Ages primarily — to devotee (7)
43 Man's first meeting with space – a short moon landing region (4)
44 Bet on it, last in race? (4)

DOWN

1 Plenty lay claim to such trousers (4)
2 Algae, variedly lush or toxic, not found in Cos? (8)
4 In sun wear woman's right out – what's almost bound to come? (4)
5 Behold early Christian leaders once again rising (4)
6 Believer in God etc. - strange deity, ultimate in characters for time (5)
7 This the complexion of some prudes? (3)
9 Put grease on crack (4)
14 For swimmers or hands-and-knees fishermen? (6)
15 Traders making errant careers out east (6)
17 Frantic indeed, involving extreme emergency, this signal (6)
18 Irish family head – big man upholding strike (6)
19 A fortress city? Not first case perhaps, this (4)
20 You and I would be joined thus (3)
21 Temple – one put up's enormous (4)
23 Young oak that's settled, given time, among hillside growth (8)
26 A length of double yarn (3)
27 Ducks display these on water, half inappropriately, when rising (7)
32 Mac —— be well, wan in ailing (5)
34 One surrounded by clamour – of the Hunt? (4)
36 Subject of dispute with bookmaker? (4)
37 Stretch of work you got over all right (4)
38 Ferment? Yes, this is, in odd places (4)
40 Travel east to find such a creek? (That's wide of the mark?) No, north! (3)

Solution to No 1336



Prizewinners to No 1336
A. Keefe (London SE7)
Tina Bailey (Hong Kong)
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Application forms and further particulars may be obtained by **written request** from the **General Secretary, Post Office Engineering Union, Greystoke House, 150 Brunswick Road, Ealing, London W5 1AW.** The closing date for the receipt of completed application forms is by first post on **Friday 25 April 1980.**

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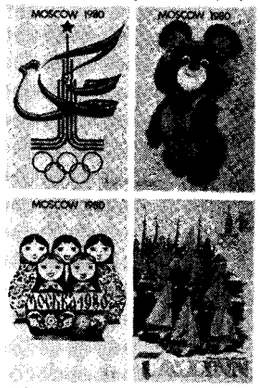

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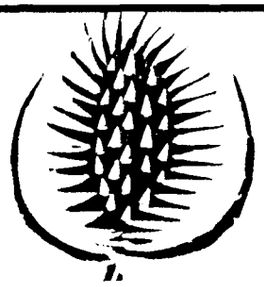

14th Annual

Plowden Conference

Bishop Grosseteste College, Lincoln

18-21 August 1980

Write for details to The Conference Secretary, Bishop Grosseteste College, Lincoln.

Theatres

ALDWYCH Royal Shakespeare Company. 836 6404. Recorded booking info 836 5332. New London season opens 8 April with 'Twelfth Night'. Also 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' from 7 May and 'The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby' from 5 June. RSC also at The Warehouse in Chekhov's 'Three Sisters'. RSC also at the Piccadilly Theatre in Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman's 'Once in A Lifetime' and Pam Gems' 'Piaf'.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. 'Threads' by John Byrne sequal to 'The Slab Boys' directed by Robin Lefèvre. Mon.-Sat. 8 p.m. Sat. mat. 4.30 p.m. 'Ceaselessly funny' T.T.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'Othello', 'The Wild Duck', 'Amadeus', 'Death of A Salesman', 'When We Are Married', 'The Iceman Cometh'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded info. 928 2256.

OLD VIC, 928 7616. Nimrod Theatre of Australia production 'The Club' by David Williamson. 'Riotous mickey-take of life in Brian Cloughland Down Under' E. News. 4 March-12 April. Evgs 7.30. Sat Mat 2.30.

Cinema

SCREEN ON THE HILL. 435 3366 (oop. Belsize Park Tube). 'My Brilliant Career' (U). Progs. 3.20, 5.20, 7.20, 9.20.

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'DETRITUS' by G. Roy Levin a mixed media art work at the Pentonville Gallery, 46 Amwell Street, EC1. Tel. 01-837 9826 20 March to 26 April. Mon.-Sat. 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

Meetings

THE LABOUR PARTY INQUIRY: Fabian Seminar 10.30 to 4.30. Saturday 29 March, Assembly Room, Central Hall, Westminster. Chair: Bryan Stanley. Speakers: Larry Whitty, John Cartwright, Dianne Hayter, Mike Thomas, Victor Schonfield. Entrance £1. All welcome.

MEETING TO COMMEMORATE Charles Bradlaugh's First Election to the Commons April 1880. The Library, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., London WC1. Thurs. 3 April, 7 p.m. Spkrs Christopher Price MP, Dr Edward Royle, Nicolas Walter.

ADLERIAN SOCIETY. 'Using Adler and Jung in Counselling'. A talk by Mollie Dundas, BA, ABPsS, followed by discussion. 7.30 p.m. Tuesday 1 April. Refreshments from 7.15. Community Rooms, Millman St (East side), WC1. Visitors welcome 50p. (Students 25p).

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE: Sunday lectures on religion and philosophy. Enquiries: 06285 26464.

ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY
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Speaker: **Derek Ingram,** Editor of Gemini News Service in Zimbabwe as media adviser to the commonwealth observer group. Chairman: **Rt. Hon. Malcolm MacDonald O.M.**

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50 Gloucester Place, London W1H 3HJ
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All welcome. Refreshments before and after lectures.

WILLIAMS COMMITTEE REPORT: Open Debate with Bernard Williams and other members of the Committee. ICA, Wed. 2 April 7.30 p.m.

CIVIL AVIATION NEWS Meeting: John Smith MP, Russell Kerr MP, Dave Wetzel (CAN Editor). Chairman — Gordon Clark. Monday 31 March 7.30 p.m. Queens Building, Heathrow.

CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY. 'Picketing and the Law'. Wed. 2 April 7.30 p.m. 5 Tavistock Place, WC1. All welcome.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for pamphlets, book list, programme. Sun. 30 Mar. 8 p.m. Open Q/A Meeting 'Psychic Laws & Phenomena'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

MEETING ON CENSORSHIP in the Media. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Thurs. 17 April 7 p.m. Spkrs: Stuart Hood & Philip Hodson (Editor of 'Forum').

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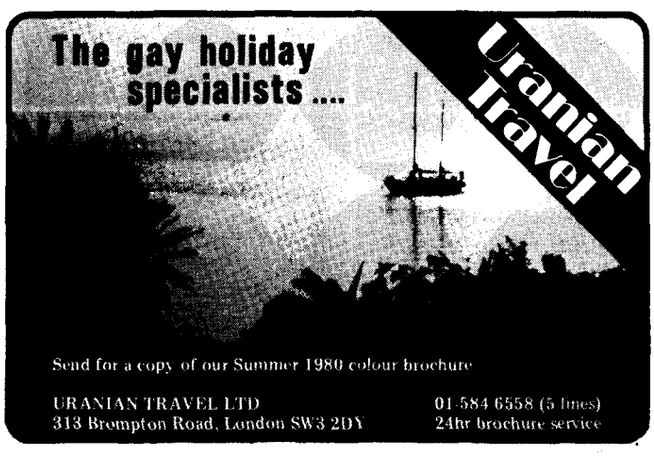
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